



Imaging Globalisation

Globalisation as a Textual Characteristic in the Literary Works of Rana Dasgupta and Caryl Phillips

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PhD Dissertation

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Imaging Globalisation.

Globalisation as a Textual Characteristic in the Literary Works of
Rana Dasgupta and Caryl Phillips.

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Abstract

This dissertation contributes to endeavours within the field of Literary Studies to explore globalisation discourses as exemplified in contemporary literature. It engages with the idea of globalisation as a textual characteristic. The dissertation examines literary texts as meaningful globalisation narratives that articulate radical changes to contemporary organisational patterns as well as phenomenological experiences of being-in-the-world. It comprises close readings of four contemporary novels: *Tokyo Cancelled* (2004) and *Solo* (2009) by Rana Dasgupta, and *A Distant Shore* (2003) and *In the Falling Snow* (2009) by Caryl Phillips. Within these four novels, multiple globalisation discourses enter into dialogue. Each of these works thematises a simultaneity of seemingly incongruent conceptions of globalisation.

Resumé

Denne afhandling bidrager til eksisterende forskning indenfor litteraturstudier som undersøger globaliseringsdiskurser og deres repræsentationer i litteraturen. Afhandlingen beskæftiger sig med globalisering som et tekstuel karaktertræk. Den undersøger litterære tekster som globaliseringsnarrativer der artikulerer drastiske ændringer i nutidens sociale former samt i vores forståelse af subjektet i verden. Afhandlingen tager udgangspunkt i nærlæsninger af fire nutidige romaner: *Tokyo Cancelled* (2004) og *Solo* (2009) af Rana Dasgupta samt *A Distant Shore* (2003) og *In the Falling Snow* (2009) af Caryl Phillips. I disse fire romaner iscenesættes en dialog imellem mange forskellige globaliseringsdiskurser. Hvert af disse værker tematiserer opfattelser af globalisering der tilsyneladende er uoverensstemmende, men som i romanerne fremstår som samtidige og indbyrdes afhængige.

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Introduction and the Motif

The ways in which globalisation is represented have fundamental economic, political, and social impacts. The term ‘globalisation’ is used at large within popular culture as well as in academic endeavours to name changes to societal structures. However, these changes are manifold and disseminated in differing ways, often through strategically monistic discourses. Competing accounts of globalisation are employed to influence political and social action, investing this phenomenon with particular meanings and norms that promote a wide range of agendas.

Thus, prior to his first presidential election in 2008, when Barack Obama gave a speech about American competitiveness on the global market, he invoked a potent imagery of globalisation. Obama recalled visiting the Google Headquarters in California where a large monitor displayed a rotating, three-dimensional image of the globe. “[A]cross this image,” Obama explained, “there were countless lights in different colors” (Obama, 2008). These rainbow lights signified Google searches taking place all over the world. In Obama’s speech, this image becomes a metaphor for universal ‘enlightenment’, symbolising “a world where old boundaries are disappearing; a world where communication, connection, and competition can come from anywhere” (ibid.). The imagery presents globalisation as the equivalent of boundless information, communication, and capital flows. It also warns the American public that the disappearing borders of America could no longer stem “the tide of globalization” (ibid.), implicitly equated with competitive market forces. By giving globalisation this metaphorical visage of a powerful force of nature, Obama ascertained the inescapability that American businesses must embrace the global market.

The speech was given at a time when the Great Recession loomed large ahead. To ensure continual flows of capital into America and thus to reduce national financial repercussions of the recession, an opening up to the global market was considered essential. By presenting globalisation, a network of limitless exchange, as a *fait accompli* Obama’s oratory made endeavours to resist internationalisation of the American market unfeasible. Globalisation was presented as inevitable and, through the positive imagery of global ‘enlightenment’ and ‘progress’, a development that is beneficial to all.

What Obama's speech does not address, however, is the uneven distribution of these lights of connectivity and opportunity. In 2014, 87.7% of the population in North America had Internet access, whereas on the African continent this number was a limited 26.5%¹. Significant parts of the world cannot access Google's symbolic network of global 'enlightenment'. Moreover, this image tacitly styles a privileged corporate elite, the Google corporation, as the instigators and managers of globalisation. The globalisation of markets and capital is not, in fact, representative of "a world where old boundaries are disappearing". More often than not it epitomises instead a continuation of residual hierarchies, veiled in Obama's speech by the discourse of 'unlimited' exchange.

Globalisation narratives directly impact on every aspect of contemporary life. They are constructed and deployed to influence and legitimate particular patterns of economic, political, and social organisation. Effective navigation in a world informed by globalisation discourses is contingent upon an intimate understanding of globalisation as a strategic narrative that carries immediate and authoritative power.

This dissertation is centred on this conception of globalisation as narrative. It contributes to endeavours within the field of Literary Studies to examine literary representations of globalisation. It considers literary texts to be meaningful globalisation narratives that articulate recent changes to contemporary patterns of organisation and individual experiences. It comprises a heuristic examination of the ways in which literature engages with and shapes the concept of globalisation through a production of new literary forms.

Notably, I approach the subject of globalisation not from the perspective of the cultural critic, but as a scholar of literature. The purpose of this dissertation is not rhetorical. It does not read literary works exclusively, or even primarily, with reference to their social function. The approach is an aesthetic one: How is 'the global' represented in literature? Do representations of globalisation in literature speak to theoretical conceptions of globalisation as a political, economic, or social practice? –In what ways do literary globalisation narratives add to and complexify existing theories of globalisation?

¹ Statistics found at www.internetworldstats.com. Africa statistics: <http://www.internetworldstats.com/stats1.htm>. America statistics: <http://www.internetworldstats.com/stats2.htm>.

The discourses of globalisation are numerous and diverse. They emphasise various paths of relation and invoke different instantiations of global convergence. Manfred B. Steger, James Goodman & Erin K. Wilson describe these discourses as being influenced by ideology. They uncover how globalisation discourses are constructed and deployed, ever contingent upon the particular context within which they are produced. Imre Szeman, too, characterises globalisation as an “ideological” and “political project” (Szeman, 2007). While globalisation “is at one level ‘real’ and has ‘real’ effects, it is also decisively and importantly rhetorical, metaphoric, and even fictional – reality given a narrative shape and logic, and in a number of different and irreconcilable ways” (ibid.). Accordingly, rather than being impartial reflections of an objective reality, globalisation narratives can be usefully understood as discursive figurations that seek to explain and accentuate forms of convergence. In other words, a cognition of the world as a whole, made manifest in a global imaginary, is largely developed through and iterated by discursive representations of worldwide connectivity. Globalisation serves as a narrative meta-structure through which we represent and interpret the contemporary moment in time. As argued by Liam Connell, globalisation can be understood as “a textual characteristic” (Connell, “Global Narratives: Globalisation and Literary Studies”, 2004, p. 79) and a performative narrative that shapes how we imagine and structure a global order.

Thus, the scholarly discipline of Literary Studies is well-suited to provide meaningful analyses of globalisation. Literary Studies “is characterized by [...] its attention to the powerful uses (and abuses) of language in shaping and mediating our encounter with the world” (Szeman, 2007). Literary Studies therefore offers a unique and particularly alert insight in a globalisation context. The field examines globalisation through a focus on its entrenched heterogeneous discourses, thereby acknowledging that globalisation constitutes a composite and uneven process.

When engaging with the concept of globalisation, literary studies may usefully draw upon theorisations of globalisation developed within other scholarly fields, as I shall do here. However, as Liam Connell & Nicky Marsh observe, while literary studies may benefit from such an interdisciplinary approach, the field itself also “has much to offer an analysis of the discourses of globalization” (Connell & Marsh, 2011, p. xvi). Within the interface of Literary and Globalisation Studies, globalisation appears not simply as a change to existing configurations from territorialised to de-territorialised forms, but first and foremost as a way

of reviewing and representing this change that accentuates, and also reproduces, global connectivity. When thus understood primarily as a discursive concept, or a textual characteristic, we recognise globalisation as a particular way of seeing; a perspective that impacts on the ways in which we structure organisational patterns and conceive of our own being-in-the-world.

Connell & Marsh observe that “[i]n comparison to other disciplines, literary studies has been relatively slow to turn to the question of globalization” (Connell & Marsh, 2011, p. 94). Suman Gupta also addresses this hesitation of literary studies to genuinely consider the impact of globalisation upon modes of representation and interpretation. He writes that “literary studies do not pick up globalization as a concept that emerges, so to speak, from *within*, but somewhat resistantly as a term that batters on them from the *outside* and will not be denied” (Gupta, 2009, p. 229). Indeed, there is a substantial temporal lag between political, economic, and social theorisations of globalisation and subsequent endeavours within literary studies to address this phenomenon. During the 1990s and early 2000s theorisations of globalisation were produced within disciplines as diverse as economics, philosophy, sociology, geography, history, politics, and media studies. Globalisation was widely conceptualised as one of the most dominant paradigms since the late 20th century for explaining the transformation of political, cultural, and economic relationships in the world. Literary studies, however, continue to rely predominantly on postcolonial and postmodern models when evaluating transnational flows.

A certain conceptual overlap therefore exists between Postcolonial and Globalisation Studies. Postcolonialism offers a vocabulary which, to a certain extent, describes transnational structures and addresses emergent forms that cannot not be contained within hegemonies of national and cultural homogeneity. Yet, postcolonialism, as the term ‘post’ implies, remains anchored in the colonial structures of the past that it seeks to leave behind². Postcolonial models are centred on discourses of power centres and peripheries, cultural authenticity and hybridity, diasporic belonging and national identity. They are anchored in

² For examinations of the interrelation between postcolonialism and globalisation see for example Simon During, “Postcolonialism and Globalization: Towards a history of their inter-relation”, 2010; Simon Gikandi, “Globalization and the Claims of Postcoloniality”, 2001; Arif Dirlik, “Rethinking Colonialism: Globalization, Postcolonialism, And The Nation”, 2011.

clearly delineated, albeit often transgressed and therefore ‘hybridized’, categories of race, nationality, and culture. Postcolonialism is concerned with the legacy of a specifically Western imperialism, and therein it remains bound to the territorially and culturally bordered discourses of the past that it critiques. Such discourses, however, are made progressively less qualifiable by the new global order.

Globalisation Studies is principally concerned with present and future modalities. As Connell suggests, one of the central characteristics of dominant globalisation discourses is “the disavowal of a continuity between globalisation and earlier imperialist or colonising phases of modernity” (Connell, 2004, p. 79). Within a globalisation context the postcolonial focus on a distinctly Western hegemony is decentred. Global hierarchies and inequalities are not explored solely, nor even primarily, as resulting from a historical extension of Anglo-American sovereignty beyond Western centres of power, but as arising from restricted access to de-territorialised networks of power and privilege in the present. Globalisation Studies take the blurring of boundaries between power centres and peripheries, cultural and racial hybridity, and multivalent national affiliations to be axiomatic. These are considered general, rather than culturally or ethnically specific, conditions of the contemporary global order, and Globalisation Studies examines these subjects only insofar as they inform mobility and access to global networks.

Postcolonial reading strategies are anchored in a critique of enduring colonial discourses, and so cannot adequately describe the ways in which globalisation narratives claim to represent an experience that is inherently new. Nonetheless, the contemporary world order cannot be adequately understood without reference to the imperial history from which it emerged and the colonial legacies which continue to inform the present. Postcolonialism thus provides highly serviceable models for critiquing this continued influence of residual hierarchies and discourses of European imperialism. It prompts, for example, an indispensable critical stance towards single-mindedly futuristic and celebratory globalisation narratives such as Obama’s invocations of global enlightenment through a supposedly ‘open’ market. Accordingly, my turn towards Globalisation Studies does not signify a disavowal of the continued usefulness of postcolonial models. Rather, it addresses what I consider to be a timely and prolific correlation of Globalisation and Literary Studies in order to examine how contemporary literature also produces new imaginaries that are de-territorialised and global in scope. While it is not my objective here to examine the ways in which Postcolonial and

Globalisation Studies hinge upon one another, I am sensitive to their disciplinary interface, which might usefully be further explored. Such a study merits individual attention, however, and is beyond the scope of this dissertation.

This dissertation focuses on what I consider to be the imperative for Literary Studies to address globalisation as a new narrative optics. I align myself with Connell & Marsh and Gupta, who assert that, regardless of the scholarly hesitancy within Literary Studies to engage with globalisation, this particular phenomenon has, in fact, introduced an unprecedented condition that cannot be adequately described with reference to orthodox postcolonial analysis. There remains a largely unexamined dialectic between Literary and Globalisation Studies that begs scholarly attention. Indeed, the concept of globalisation does not merely, as Gupta argues, batter on Literary Studies ‘from the outside’. If that were the case, then the call for Literary Studies to take up the mantle of globalisation “comes across as a rearguard manoeuvre to catch up with phenomena that have already taken place at some other more meaningful or important level” (Szeman, 2007). Rather, as we shall see, the poetics and politics of globalisation are engrained within contemporary literature, which, often explicitly, engages with, reshapes, and even rejects dominant globalisation narratives.

Contemporary literature constitutes a prominent site of articulation for globalisation narratives, and a new vocabulary is needed within Literary Studies with which to address these narratives. I propose that the nexus between Literary and Globalisation Studies provides a fresh and timely perspective on how contemporary literature represents patterns of social organisation and modes of being-in-the-world that are shaped by global connectivity and, further, that such globalisation narratives not only reflect, but are also actively involved in a continual production and reproduction of the world as a totality.

What follows in the proceeding chapters is my scholarly engagement with four literary works as representative globalisation narratives. They are *Tokyo Cancelled* (2004) and *Solo* (2009) by Rana Dasgupta, and *A Distant Shore* (2003) and *In the Falling Snow* (2009) by Caryl Phillips. Each of these works manifests a shift away from territorial and bordered modalities towards increasingly de-territorialised and networked forms, and each work, in its way, heralds the advent of a new global order. They explore four questions around which scholarly

debates about globalisation also continue to revolve³: What is globalisation? When is the moment of globalisation? What does globalisation feel like? And has globalisation, in fact, engendered intrinsically new ways of seeing, new ways of understanding being-in-the-world? All four works are thus actively invested in the production of globalisation narratives.

Existing analysis of *Tokyo Cancelled*, *Solo*, *A Distant Shore* and *In the Falling Snow* are predominantly based on postcolonial reading strategies. They argue that these works offer a critique of bordered conceptions of identity and forms of social organisation, which remain paradoxically prevalent at a time of unprecedented movement across the world's borders. They consider how the four works articulate a close correlation between residual forms of domination and emergent hierarchies produced by globalisation. However, these analyses of Dasgupta and Phillips' works do not examine in any particular detail the ways in which they also manifest new and global visions.

This hitherto unexamined aspect of Dasgupta and Phillips' works is the point of departure for my project. I read their works within the context of Globalisation Studies. The new, global framework facilitates the original recognition of *Tokyo Cancelled*, *Solo*, *A Distant Shore*, and *In the Falling Snow* as future-oriented globalisation narratives. Within these literary worlds, de-territorialised networks challenge residual structures. As the borders of racial, cultural, and territorial categories become ambiguous and permeable in a global age, the four works present network access as the principal catalyst of sovereignty.

The dissertation establishes a useful distinction between Dasgupta and Phillips' globalisation narratives. The distinction rests on their different applications of scale in topical terms and in terms of narrative technique. Dasgupta's *Tokyo Cancelled* and *Solo* employ the fabulous language of romance, whereas *A Distant Shore* and *In the Falling Snow* make use of psychological realism. Dasgupta is concerned with the dynamics of expansive, global networks. Phillips, on the other hand, zooms in on the experiencing mind of the subject who navigates and negotiates these networks on a local level. I describe Dasgupta and Phillips' different approaches as 'panoramic' and 'close-up' globalisation narratives, respectively. This photography terminology serves as a figurative model in which the project grasps Dasgupta and Phillips' different applications of scale. The collocation of Dasgupta and Phillips'

³ See Ritzer & Atalay (2010)

globalisation narratives –the first panoramic, the latter close-up in scope– facilitates the recognition that globalisation operates on multiple levels and incorporates diverse discourses simultaneously. Globalisation does not unfold in these works as a comprehensive organisational pattern, or as an objective ‘reality’. Globalisation appears as a multidimensional and at times contradictory narrative; one that is characterised by a general recognition of an intimate connection between the global and the local, the universal and the particular.

The dissertation is comprised of three main chapters. Since Literary Studies continues to rely on models that are inadequate in grappling with globalisation discourses, I rely on an imported globalisation vocabulary to facilitate my analyses of Dasgupta and Phillips’ works as globalisation narratives. This vocabulary is outlined in chapter one, “Imaging Globalisation”, which discusses two theoretical debates central within Globalisation Studies today, two distinct approaches to representing, or ways of ‘imaging’ globalisation. The literary analyses in the two subsequent chapters do not claim either to substantiate or to reject these theories of globalisation, which are formulated outside the literary focus of this project.

Chapter two, “The Panorama. A World of Networks”, includes my close readings of Dasgupta’s *Tokyo Cancelled* and *Solo*. I argue that the two works perform panoramic literary mappings of the contemporary order as informed by expansive networks. *Tokyo Cancelled* incorporates multiple and competing globalisation discourses. Therein, *Tokyo Cancelled* challenges the current consensus that globalisation is predominantly narrated as being ideologically “capitalist” and “economic at its core” (Szeman, 2007). The globalisation of capital does play a significant role in *Tokyo Cancelled* as one of the driving forces of globalisation. However, *Tokyo Cancelled* couples this economic aspect of globalisation with other aspects which possess at least an equal power and potency.

Solo offers a temporal perspective on globalisation. It tracks the history of globalisation from the early 20th century onwards as the product of 100 years of discontinuous epochal change. *Solo* envisions the past 100 years as a series of restructurations resulting from an unfulfilled quest for a unifying Narrative of the World. *Solo*’s temporal mapping of the global order as growing out of modernity engages with the concept of globalisation as periodization, marking a specific moment in time. My analysis of *Solo* is concerned with the

ways in which the novel can be said to invent an origin story of globalisation, and therein to identify a ‘moment of globalisation’.

Chapter three, “The Close-up. Globalisation and the Loss of Community” provides close readings of Phillips’ *A Distant Shore* and *In the Falling Snow*. These works produce two close-up representations of globalisation as a lived experience. *A Distant Shore* and *In the Falling Snow* are centred on a theme that recurs also within scholarly globalisation discourses; namely, the disengagement of the subject from community as a result of globalisation processes⁴. In *A Distant Shore*, escalating migration and the concomitant de-territorialisation of identity and belonging, has destabilised the borders of community. The ensuing crisis of community appears metaphorically in *A Distant Shore* as a (social) pathology, the symptoms of which are xenophobia and violence. This ‘condition’ is mirrored in the inner life of the protagonists who experience existential crisis, and even psychosis. Globalisation in this novel manifests as a perilous ‘condition’ of isolation, of being-out-of-place. In my reading of *A Distant Shore*, I look at the ways in which this work topples celebratory globalisation narratives of an ‘open world’.

In the Falling Snow envisions a temporal trajectory from a colonial to a postcolonial, to a global order. It points towards a close connection and a certain level of continuity between the colonial, the postcolonial, and the global that needs to be recognised. However, I argue that, while *In the Falling Snow* does indeed present the past as a haunting influence upon the present, it also calls attention to the pitfalls of overstating the hold of the past over contemporary realities. *In the Falling Snow* envisions a new way of understanding being-in-the-world; one that is globally oriented and therefore cannot be described with reference to existing postcolonial models. In this final analysis, then, I return to the question of the interface between Postcolonialism and globalisation as two distinct, yet interrelated reading strategies.

‘Globalisation’ is a contested term which is employed with significant conceptual slippage between different scholarly disciplines. Therefore, a pre-emptory outline of my conceptual point of departure is required.

⁴ See for example Bauman (2012), Augé (1995), and Sen (2006).

Globalisation is generally considered to produce unprecedented forms of social organisation which transcend the boundaries of the nation-state and which cannot be contained within hegemonic discourses of national and cultural heterogeneity. *In Bound Together: How Traders, Preachers, Adventurers, and Warriors Shaped Globalization* (2007), Nayan Chanda argues that, although the term ‘globalisation’ is of recent pedigree, the processes it signifies, that is the increasing interconnectedness of the globe, have “worked silently for millennia without having been given a name” (Chanda, 2007, p. xi). However, such an expansive conceptualisation of globalisation risks rendering the term void of meaning. If globalisation is defined merely as every border-crossing between ‘inside’ and ‘outside’, then the term becomes inclusive to the point of encompassing everything and therefore nothing in particular. In order for globalisation to serve as a meaningful analytical framework, it must retain a certain historical specificity. Certainly, people, goods, and ideas have always crossed borders and intermingled. What is new, however, is the sheer volume of these movements from the late 20th century onwards⁵.

At this point in time, capital, populations, images, and information began to move in much greater mass than ever before and at increasing speed. The Internet and satellite communications made it possible to transfer vast amounts of money in a matter of seconds, thus destabilising otherwise solid economies. Advances within travel technologies now enable the circumvention of the globe in a single day. According to the International Organization of Migration, there were an estimated 232 million international migrants in 2014; that is 3.2% of the world’s population. If gathered in one state, these migrants would constitute the 5th most populous country in the world.⁶ The development of instant messaging, cellular phones and television compel the global subject to stay in touch with and keep informed about current events 24 hours a day. Recent technological developments have, as famously described by David Harvey, initiated a ‘process of the annihilation of space through time’ (Harvey, 1990), that is, a radical speed-up of movement and communication that eliminates spatial distances or barriers. These technologies have shifted conceptions of time and space, inducing an

⁵ As comprehensively argued and established by globalisation theorists such as Anthony Giddens in his *Runaway World* (1999), Arif Dirlik in “Globalization as the end and the beginning of history: The contradictory implications of a new paradigm” (2000), and by Michel-Rolph Trouillot in “The Perspective of the World: Globalization Then and Now” (2002).

⁶ Statistics about international migration quoted from IOM official website.

experience of what Harvey terms ‘time-space compression’. In other words, they bring geographically and culturally disparate parts of the world into ever-closer proximity.

Mass and velocity are unique to the contemporary moment, as is the widespread awareness of global flows. With reference to prominent works on the impact of globalisation upon the contemporary order such as Arjun Appadurai’s *Modernity at Large. Cultural Dimensions of Globalization* (1996) and Zygmunt Bauman’s *Liquid Modernity* (2000), George Ritzer contends that, whereas the world was previously described by reference to ‘solid’ territorial borders, it is now conceived in de-territorialised terms of liquid global ‘flows’ (Ritzer, 2010, pp. 1-28). The metaphor of liquidity has obtained canonical status in globalisation discourses. It invokes characteristics of transience and contagion as characteristics of “the present global age” (Ritzer, 2010, p. xiv). In this view, globalisation has effected a diminution of spatial, temporal, and social barriers which were in the past perceived as unambiguous, or “solid”. With the invention of new travel and communications technologies, information, images, ideas, and capital are becoming ever more immaterial in the sense that they can be transferred through etherspace almost instantaneously from one place to another.

However, as Anna Tsing observes, the human sense of scale has not, in fact, been annihilated by this compression of time and space (Tsing, 2000). Rather, globalisation has transformed existing “ideologies of scale”, which are always defined by reference to historically and culturally specific “claims about locality, regionality, and globality; about stasis and circulation; and about networks and strategies of proliferation” (Tsing, 2000, p. 347). The barriers of the past have not collapsed, but mutated so as to accommodate a global order. Global ‘flows’ do not move unrestrictedly along smooth paths of relation, but are often surveyed and limited through what Ritzer terms “subtler structural barriers” (Ritzer, 2010, p. 23). Alongside the process of liquefaction, then, infrastructures are developed to manage and regulate these global flows. In a world where spatial and temporal borders seem to be dissolving, access rather than territory becomes the central determinant of sovereignty. The almost boundless freedom of movement often associated with globalisation is contingent upon access to networks of communication and travel which are largely reserved for, and controlled by, a global elite. The global order has generated new hierarchies and ruptures.

Imagine a globe, a three-dimensional world map, where what is recorded are lines of movement and velocity. These lines criss-cross the surface of the globe, each on their own trajectory, but in their course adjoin with other lines, thus for a brief moment interrupting an otherwise inexorable movement. Potentially, these meetings may alter the direction of flows and create new constellations, but movement will eventually be resumed. Globalisation may be thus understood in metaphorical terms as a vast and complex network of alternating currents, of confluent and diffracting strands. The intricacy of this network seems to impede any all-encompassing analysis. Yet, by fixing a pin to the map, holding fast a particular current at a specific location at a definite time, we can perhaps discern how other flows are affecting the point we have designated. I adopt such a heuristic approach and explore globalisation in the manner of momentary images and local manifestations of connectivity.

1. Imaging Globalisation.

Paul James & Manfred B. Steger identify two dimensions of globalisation. The first dimension is an 'objective' one. The 'objective' dimension of globalisation involves "material connectivity" (James & Steger, 2011, p. 53) and is measurable by reference to economic, technological, and migration indicators of global interdependence. The second dimension is 'subjective'. It encompasses "the thickening of our consciousness of the world as an interconnected whole" (ibid.). According to James & Steger, globalisation incorporates these objective and subjective dimensions simultaneously. The "objective spread and intensification of social relations across the world space" and "the subjective meanings, ideas, sensibilities, and understandings associated with those material processes" are inextricably "bound up with each other" (James & Steger, 2013, p. 19). As James & Steger argue, conceptions of globalisation as an 'objective' *or* a 'subjective' development are two dimensions of an overarching process that influences every level of the social order. This chapter takes a very similar point of departure. It outlines the central arguments in two of the dominant debates in contemporary globalisation theory. The first of these debates is concerned with the ways in which globalisation influences the macrostructures of social organisation, while the second is centred on globalisation as it impacts on the microstructures of being-in-the-world. These debates about global governance and individual agency, respectively, are considered representative of the multidimensional character of globalisation.

However, James & Steger's distinction between 'objective' and 'subjective' dimensions of globalisation induces conceptual disorientation. The term 'objective' tends to invoke that which always already is: An impartial and incontrovertible Fact. To speak of an 'objective' dimension of globalisation risks theorising what is, in fact, a complex and contested phenomenon as a unified and inexorable process. When juxtaposed with this 'objective' dimension, which according to James & Steger is characterised by being quantifiable, the 'subjective dimension' in the form of an emergent global imaginary seems by comparison immaterial and abstract. The terminology implicitly posits a lived reality as a fanciful product of the imagination and thus gives precedence to those processes which can be 'objectively' measured and described. As argued by James & Steger, globalisation must be understood as a simultaneity of material flows and 'immaterial' imaginaries which collectively constitute and shape globalisation. Yet, although James & Steger do indeed argue in favour of their intrinsic interdependency, the conceptual distinction of 'objective' and 'subjective'

dimensions suggests, in my view, a dichotomous relationship between the multivalent processes of globalisation. Instead, I propose a distinction between ‘structural’ and ‘phenomenological’ dimensions of globalisation. I do not employ the terms ‘structural’ and ‘phenomenological’ as entrenched traditions of modernity. In my use of these terms, they refer to two distinct orientational practices within Globalisation Studies. The ‘structural’ perspective is concerned with how globalisation transforms patterns of organisation, whereas the ‘phenomenological’ approach pertains to individual sensibilities of, and engagements with, these transformations.

The complexity of globalisation as it operates on multiple levels, influencing systems of global governance as well as phenomenological experiences, impedes an all-encompassing analysis. To ‘objectively’ and exhaustively map the intricate dynamics of globalisation is a daunting task indeed, further complicated by the velocity and mass of global flows. Arguably, globalisation can be captured only contextually, as it manifests in a specific location at a particular time. Such a situational approach explores globalisation in the manner of local manifestations of connectivity and may be usefully considered through the chronotope of the photograph⁷.

As defined by Mikhail Bakhtin, the chronotope is preoccupied with “the intrinsic connectedness of temporal and spatial relationships” (Bakhtin, 2011, p. 84). It constitutes a particular optics, a way of reading and representing time-space relations that “expresses the inseparability of space and time” (ibid.). In the chronotope “spatial and temporal indicators are fused” into a whole; time “thickens, takes on flesh, becomes artistically visible” while space “becomes charged and responsive to the movements of time, plot, and history” (ibid.). Certainly, the photograph performs such a thickening of time and an interpellation of space. The photograph creates an illusion of arrested time. It freezes time and space within its frame and thereby allows the viewer to scrutinise the motif and to discern a pattern of relation between the elements it includes. The space that it captures is opened up for interpretation and

⁷ Although for Mikhail Bakhtin the chronotope serves as an optics for reading the interplay between spatial and temporal elements in the novel, the application of the chronotope has been extended to other cultural expressions as well, including representations within photography, painting, and cinema. See for example: Paul Smethurst *Reading Space and Time in Contemporary Fiction* (2000); Stephano Calzatti, “Intermediality, Multimodality and Medial Chronotopes: A Comparison between the Travel Book and the Travel Blog.” (2014); Lily Alexander, “Storytelling in Time and Space: Studies in the Chronotope and Narrative Logic on Screen.” (2007).

is resultantly charged with meaning. Notably, the intrinsic relationship between the dimensions of space and time is also of particular interest to globalisation studies which, as succinctly argued by David Harvey, examine an emergent condition of time-space compression (Harvey, 1990). The chronotope is therefore highly applicable to scholarly endeavours that engage with the ways in which globalisation narratives represent recent changes to conceptualisations of space and time. As chronotope the photograph is helpful insofar as it facilitates the recognition that endeavours to render theoretically or artistically a dynamics of globalisation are selective and interpretive. Outside the image, the instant the shutter closes, what a photograph displays will be in the past and the tableau will have transformed, as events spill over into other events. In a similar fashion, endeavours to 'capture' a dynamics of globalisation are immediately superseded. The velocity and mass of global flows are perpetually alternating and therefore obstruct any final definition.

The chronotope of the photograph as a partial representation proves particularly serviceable in view of the process of selection that precedes its creation. When taking a photograph, the photographer chooses to include certain elements, and thus, inevitably, to omit others. In modifying the scale of the shot, the photographer may zoom out to take a panorama and capture a broad outlook, or zoom in to take a close-up and capture certain elements in particular detail. However, by zooming out the photographer prioritises scope over detail and vice versa. There is a certain power of perspective to be noted here: In creating an image, the photographer partakes in shaping the viewer's understanding and perception of the motif and its reality. The production of an image is both an act of interpretation and appropriation. Since globalisation is multidimensional and surpasses definition as a single, unified process, to capture it necessitates a similarly selective approach. By zooming out or in on the elusive map of globalisation, the globalisation theorist or storyteller can emphasise and evaluate specific paths of relation, whether structural or phenomenological. Yet, their representations are fragmental aspects of an infinitely complex phenomenon. Globalisation narratives may strive to be complete renditions, but are, in fact, like the two-dimensional reflections of a three-dimensional reality in the photograph⁸, partial representations.

⁸ About fragmentary and interpretational character of the photograph, see Susan Sontag, *On Photography*. (Sontag, 1977); Roland Barthes, *Camera Lucida* (1981); Juliet Hackling (ed.), *Photography—The Whole Story* (2012). For information about the subjectivity of human vision, which invariably guides the ways in which the camera is applied and operated by the photographer, see John Berger's *Ways of Seeing* (1972).

I employ the term ‘imaging’, as opposed to ‘theorising’ or ‘conceptualising’, to designate endeavours, whether theoretical or artistic, to represent globalising processes. In contrast to such terms as ‘theorising’ or ‘conceptualising’, which connote comprehensibility and objectivity, ‘imaging’ conveys a selective and interpretive approach. It hints at an irreducible reality beyond the frame. ‘Imaging’ thus establishes an implicit but essential correlation between what is represented and a wider, though indiscernible, context. Let us explore further the idea of imaging as it may be applied to theorisations of globalisation.

Globalisation theory prioritises either what I term a panoramic *or* a close-up perspective when they image globalisation processes. Both of these perspectives focus on matters of access and governance. They are preoccupied with variations on the overall theme of the global distribution of power; power, that is, to influence the direction of flows across the world’s borders. However, while the panoramic and close-up approaches to imaging globalisation share this motif, they represent two distinctive practices. The panoramic perspective is concerned with structural globalisation, while the close-up is centred on phenomenological globalisation. In other words: Whereas the panoramic perspective explores how globalisation governs organisational patterns, the close-up focuses on the ways in which globalisation affects individual agency.

The panorama ‘zooms out’ and depicts globalisation from the distanced and impersonal angle of global structures. This perspective images the formation of such structures as a vertical process that is either systemically imposed from the top-down or organically generated from the bottom-up through grassroots collaboration: An anonymous force begot and fostered from within ‘the System’ and thus ‘something’ that happens *to* people; or set in motion (and actively resisted) *by* people.

The close-up explores globalisation from a horizontal angle –a kind of ‘street view’– as a phenomenological experience. The close-up examines how globalisation influences the global subject on a local, even personal, level.

Yet, globalisation cannot adequately be conceived as a structural *or* a phenomenological process. Rather, these are interrelated dimensions of an overarching process, the constituents of which interpret, comment upon, and inform each other. They are confluent strands of an intricate helical structure which develops vertically as well as horizontally, and which can be untangled only imperfectly for theoretical, explanatory

purposes. Endeavours to image globalisation may privilege either a panoramic or a close-up perspective, but each in itself provides but a partial representation. However, these images present the same motif captured from different perspectives and can, if viewed together, provide a fuller (though never complete) understanding of the shared motif. Each perspective adds insight and contrast to the other, exposing similarities, discrepancies, or gaps. This confluence of the multiple dimensions of globalisation provides a context for the remainder of the dissertation.

There is an almost infinite number of scholarly undertakings to image globalisation. This chapter does not claim to provide an exhaustive record of these endeavours. It outlines instead some central arguments in two globalisation debates which revolve around the overall themes of global governance and individual agency. These two debates exemplify the panoramic and the close-up perspectives on globalisation mentioned above. They will be discussed under two rubrics: “The Panorama – Structural Globalisation and Global Governance” and “The Close-up – Phenomenological Globalisation and the Global Subject”, respectively.

The first rubric discusses the seminal works *Empire* (2000) and *Multitude: War and Democracy in the Age of Empire* (2004) by Michael Hardt & Antonio Negri. It also discusses Peter Marcuse’s conceptualisation of ‘globalism’ in “Said’s Orientalism: A Vital Contribution Today” (2004). While Hardt & Negri highlight the democratic grassroots potential of globalisation, Marcuse considers that globalisation is a systemically imposed and imperialist order of rule.

The second rubric looks at Zygmunt Bauman’s *Community. Seeking safety in an insecure world* (2001) and *Identity and Violence. The Illusion of Destiny* (2006) by Amartya Sen. Bauman and Sen both take the unprecedented, even revolutionary, influence of globalisation to be axiomatic. However, they offer two very different imagings of how the global subject navigates these shifts. Bauman describes how the navigation of social space, conceptualised as community, is fraught by globalising processes. According to Bauman, the global subject struggles to come to terms with a condition of de-territorialised and unstable networks. Sen, on the other hand, accentuates the redemptive potential of dynamic and confluent attachments.

My selection of the four theoretical works included in this chapter is not constitutive of an originary or canonical approach to Globalisation Studies. These specific works are

selected with reference to their topical and conceptual arguments which permeate globalisation discourses today. They are representative of four distinct globalisation narratives which are prominent in current globalisation debates⁹.

1.1. The Panorama. Structural Globalisation and Global Governance.

There are (at least) two ways of thinking about structural globalisation. The first equates globalisation with previous forms of Western imperialism. Globalisation in this view is a euphemism for capitalist market forces, controlled by the West, which work to dilute difference and universalise local expressions, so as to create a single culture of consumption. This conception holds that globalisation equals the production of a homogenous, planetary space fashioned according to Western ideals and controlled by Western capitalism. The second perspective credits localities with strength and vitality and is often referred to as ‘glocalisation’¹⁰. In this view, globalisation is a reciprocal process whereby global and local forces interact, each leaving an imprint on the other. As Gikandi points out, while we do indeed live in a world defined by economic and cultural flows across national boundaries, the world continues to be divided between its “developed” and “underdeveloped” sectors (Gikandi, 2001, p. 629). Gikandi understands globalisation as an uneven process, and

⁹ In a related manner, Steger, Goodman, & Wilson demonstrate how dominant conceptions of globalisation are contingent upon distinct globalisation discourses (Steger, Goodman, & Wilson, 2013). Notably, these discourses iterate the arguments represented by the four theoretical works included in this dissertation. Thus, ‘Market globalism’, ascribes to a globalisation discourse similar to Hardt & Negri’s *Empire*. and *Multitude*. which celebrate the democratizing potential of globalisation to break down restricting boundaries. See: David Singh Grewal, *Network Power. The Social Dynamics of Globalization*. (2008). ‘Justice globalisms’, by contrast, depend on globalisation narratives that iterate Marcuse’s understanding of globalisation as a euphemism for Western imperialism. See: Noam Chomsky *Hopes and Prospects*. (2010); Sarah van Gelder (ed.) *This Changes Everything. Occupy Wall Street and the 99% Movement*. (2011); Richard Sandbrook *Reinventing the Left in the Global South. The Politics of the Possible*. (2014). Furthermore, prominent debates about national identity in a global age, multiculturalism, and rising religious fundamentalism continuously revolve around how previous configurations of community are overturned, or indeed reinforced, by globalisation processes. See: Melissa Aronczyk, *Branding the Nation: The Global Business of National Identity*. (2013); Fathali M. Moghaddam *How Globalization Spurs Terrorism: The lopsided benefits of “one world” and why that fuels violence*. (2008); Jeremy Gilbert *Common Ground: Democracy and Collectivity in an Age of Individualism*. (2014).

¹⁰ Sociologist Robert Robertson is credited with introducing the term ‘glocalisation’ to the English vocabulary in his essay “Glocalization: Time-Space and Homogeneity-Heterogeneity.” (1995). However, the term originated as a popular business strategy in Japan during the 1980s, where it was used to refer to the strategic adaptation of global business strategies and products to local markets. Since Robertson appropriated the term, it has been used to describe local adaptations of global processes. The term combines the global and the local and attempts to capture the degree to which global and local forces impact one another and are, in fact, two aspects of one process; globalisation.

considers that it is because of these divisions that the discourses of globalisation are caught between the two competing narratives of ‘celebration’ and of ‘crisis’ (ibid.).

The following discussion of structural globalisation outlines the central arguments of these seemingly dichotomous globalisation narratives. It is considered that, rather than marking two distinct developments, grassroots and systemic forces are, in fact, confluent strands in a composite network of competing sovereignties.

Michael Hardt & Antonio Negri’s *Empire* and *Multitude* have obtained canonical, albeit controversial, status in Globalisation Studies. In these works, Hardt & Negri image globalisation as a development that incorporates an enormously positive potential. Their central argument holds that a new kind of sovereignty, a ‘network power’, has overturned previous forms of sovereignty. Power, they assert, is now primarily exerted through de-territorialised networks rather than by sovereign nation-states. Networks are highly influential ‘power grids’, the ties of which operate like lines of force¹¹ that may be activated for both democratic and regulatory purposes. At this moment in time, the “primary elements, or nodes” within the global web are “the dominant nation-states along with supranational institutions, major capitalist corporations, and other [undifferentiated] powers” (Hardt & Negri, 2006, p. xii). Thus, the dominant nodes that manage this new order constitute a disconcerting conflation of governmental sovereignty and corporate capital. The global web is controlled by government and corporate forces, the power position of which relies on their ability to sustain existing divisions and hierarchies.

The difference between new network power and earlier forms of sovereignty is that no single node in the network is entirely sovereign or autonomous: All nodes rely on communication and cooperation with other nodes to influence and manage the current global order. Because sovereignty depends upon ongoing collaboration and negotiation with other influential nodes, the network of global governance is relative and transient. Hardt & Negri use the concept of ‘Empire’ as a trope for understanding this unprecedented kind of

¹¹ ‘Lines of force’ is a term generally used in network theory to refer to the ties in a network, e.g. Marina Levina & Grant Klein, 2010. The term suggestively intimates that sovereignty, power, and dominance are often effectively exerted through the strategic management of networks. For in-depth theorisations on the network as a webbed distribution of sovereignty, see for example Alexander R. Galloway & Eugene Thacker, *The Exploit: A Theory of Networks*. (2007); Nicholas Christakis & James Fowler, *Connected. The Surprising Power of Networks and How They Shape Our Lives*. (2011).

sovereignty. The sovereignty that emerged from the European imperialist project of the 16th century onward “conceived space as bounded” and policed its boundaries carefully by sovereign administration. Hardt & Negri’s Empire, however, presents a planetary order that accepts no boundaries or limits, “its space is always open” (Hardt & Negri, 2002, p. 167). Thus, Empire surpasses the ambitions of previous forms of imperialism, which are seen as mere extensions of European sovereignty beyond the boundaries of European nation-states. European imperialism “constructed a Leviathan that overarched its social domain and imposed hierarchical territorial boundaries, both to police the purity of its own identity and to exclude all that was other” (Hardt & Negri, 2002, p. xii). Empire, by contrast, is revolutionary since it “establishes no territorial center of power and does not rely on fixed boundaries or barriers”. Indeed, Empire is “a decentered and deterritorializing apparatus of rule that progressively incorporates the entire global realm within its open, expanding frontiers” (ibid.).

In contrast to European imperialism, Empire does not strive to reduce diversity to unity. Previous forms of sovereignty, such as the nation-state, claim to govern a body of subjects collectively termed ‘the people’. Empire, on the other hand, rules over ‘the multitude’¹². Whereas, in theory, ‘the people’ represents unifying collective identity, the multitude makes no claim to homogeneity. The sheer scale of different peoples and cultures that Empire incorporates cannot be “reduced to a unity or a single identity” (Hardt & Negri, 2006, p. xiv). These “different cultures, races, ethnicities, genders, and sexual orientations, different forms of labor; different ways of living; different views of the world; and different desires” exist alongside each other. The new challenge of ‘Empire’ is not to reduce diversity to homogeneity, but to facilitate a condition that allows the multitude to “communicate and act in common while remaining internally different” (ibid.). Diversity is integral to globalisation, as is the ability (and the inclination) of the multitude to continually discover and produce what Hardt & Negri term ‘the common’. ‘The common’ resembles the formation of a network that enables communication and cooperation across difference.

Yet, Empire is currently in a state of perpetual war. The sovereign forces of Empire pretend to promote democratic freedom on a global scale. In fact, however, they operate on

¹² ‘The multitude’ is a highly ambiguous term that seems to encompass all of humanity: It comprises the “productive, creative subjectivities of globalization that have learned to sail on this enormous sea” (Hardt & Negri, 2002, p. 60).

the grounds of a worldwide ‘state of exception’ that suspends constitutional rule of law and places the ultimate power with a small elite in order to expediently deflate a conflict (Hardt & Negri, 2006, p. 7). Supreme power lies currently with a dominant elite that paradoxically claims to protect democracy, human rights, and the international rule of law through armed conflict and a perpetuation of systemic control. Since Empire incorporates the world under its rule, this state of exception and resultant systemic supervision and control are not restricted to any one (national) territory, but spans the entire globe.

A “living alternative” to this systemic sovereignty “grows within Empire” in the form of the multitude (Hardt & Negri, 2006, p. xiii). Like the imperial forces of Empire, the multitude is operates through networks:

there are two faces to globalization. On one face, Empire spreads globally its network of hierarchies and divisions that maintain order through new mechanisms of control and constant conflict. Globalization, however, is also the creation of new circuits of cooperation and collaboration that stretch across nations and continents. (Ibid.)

The multitude encompasses an immense creative potential to generate and implement alternative visions of social organisation from a democratic grassroots level. This capacity to spark collective action is contingent upon the expansive, de-territorialised axiom of Empire which conceives of diversity not as an obstacle to, but a precondition of all human interaction in a global age. Empire is thus a Janus-faced venture: The counter-powers of the multitude balance the destructive potential of imperial globalisation and safeguard the democratic ideals of a “global republic” (Hardt & Negri, 2002, p. 166). Hardt & Negri argue that due to the multitude’s vigilant resistance, ‘Empire’ does not pose the threat of becoming the Leviathan of oppression that was European imperialism.¹³ Yet, arguably, since resistance is described as

¹³ Hardt & Negri are not alone in their conceptualisation of globalisation as a differentiating and creative process that subverts oppressive forms of power and domination and provides alternative visions. In *The Anthropology of Globalization*. (2002), anthropologist Ted C. Lewellen describes what he terms “the ‘cultural logics’ of transnational global processes” (Lewellen, 2002, p.54). These cultural logics refer to the ways in which global culture, insofar as such a thing exists, is received locally: “There is a lot of discretion available at the local and individual level to take what is perceived as useful or desirable and reject what is not. Whatever trait is taken in, however, will most likely assume a meaning different –perhaps quite different– from that which it has in its place of origin” (Lewellen, 2002, pp.53-54). Appadurai assumes a similar stance when he states that “globalization is itself a deeply historical, uneven, and even localizing process. Globalization does not necessarily or even frequently imply homogenization” (Appadurai, 1996, p.17).

existing always within and as part of 'Empire', nor do these counter-powers ever pose a serious threat to the imperial project.

Empire presents an over-all positive vision of globalisation as contributing, not merely to global mobility of capital, goods, people, and cultures, but to growing individual freedom and empowerment for all. However, it has been argued that although Hardt & Negri do identify important aspects of globalisation, the notion of globalisation expressed in *Empire* and *Multitude* borders on a kind of liberalist utopianism that is largely a privilege of the academic, intellectual elite. Accordingly, Ania Loomba warns that *Empire* "resonates in disturbing ways with the claim of globalisation's neo-liberal advocates" who argue that increased mobility of capital and consumers makes obsolete previous hierarchies and inequities (Loomba, 2005, p. 216). *Empire* theorises globalisation, not merely as the inevitable future result of present developments, but as an already accomplished fact. Hardt & Negri's argument is highly problematic because, as Subhrabrata Banerjee & Stephen Linstead argue, "it serves to curtail any attempt to articulate radical reform strategies at the national, regional or local level by deeming them 'unviable' in the face of the inexorable 'logic' of international markets" (Banerjee & Linstead, 2001, pp. 687-688). In other words, the internationalisation of economic, cultural, and material flows does not necessarily mean that the world has gone 'global'.

Whereas Hardt & Negri conceive of globalisation as a new and positive development, Peter Marcuse images globalisation as a continuation of previous forms of Western imperialism. Marcuse distinguishes between the reality of globalisation and the dominant discourses through which it is represented. Globalisation "in its really existing form", Marcuse argues, is:

the internationalization of capital accompanied by and using substantial advances in communications and transportation technology, with identifiable consequences in cultural, internal and international political relations, changes in the capital/labor balance of power, work processes, roles of national government, urban patterns etc. (Marcuse, 2004, p. 810)

Like Hardt & Negri, Marcuse thus identifies profound effects of globalisation in every sphere of social production. However, Marcuse privileges the global flow of capital as the central

instigator of these ensuing cultural and societal consequences. According to Marcuse, a particular strategic discourse is employed by the West which facilitates the management of global flows. This discourse places the 'developed world' in a series of relationships with the supposedly 'inferior' developing world which ensure that the West retains the relative upper hand (ibid.). It presents "the inevitable domination of global interests –specifically, globally organized capital– over all spheres of life and all countries of the world" (Marcuse, 2004, p. 810). The globalisation of capital is rhetorically cast as "inevitable". It is depicted as an impersonal and inexorable force of nature. Global capital is portrayed as the determinant of prevailing forms of social organisation. Furthermore, this particular discourse "views the development in the 'developing world' as following the superior path of development pursued by the 'developed world'" (ibid.). A dichotomous relationship is thereby established between the West and the Rest, "the developed and the under-developed, the industrialized and the not yet industrialized, the rich and the poor – and thus, the global and the not-global" (Marcuse, 2004, p. 815), and this binary legitimates Western control of the global market.

According to Marcuse, such a discourse echoes in disturbing ways Edward Said's concept of Orientalism¹⁴. Therefore, Marcuse suggestively uses the term 'globalism' to designate the imperialist discourse of inevitable and evolutionary globalisation:

Globalism is the lens [...] that underlies almost all current policies of governments in the international arena. It sees the processes of globalization as new, as the dominant feature of our time, a structural process independent of specific acts of choice, inevitable in its really existing form, and ultimately beneficial to all, although certain distributional inequities may be seen as needing correction. It is the lens through which a substantial portion of the scholarly and intellectual discussion of globalization sees its subject matter. (Marcuse, 2004, p. 810)

¹⁴ In 1978, Edward Said published his highly influential work *Orientalism* (1978). In this work, taking the late eighteenth century as an approximate starting point, Said defines Orientalism as "The corporate institution for dealing with the Orient – dealing with it by making statements about it, authorizing views of it, describing it, by teaching it, settling it, ruling over it: in short, Orientalism as a Western style for dominating, restructuring, and having authority over the Orient" (Said, 1979, p.3). Orientalism introduced and perpetuated an essentialist and dichotomous discourse whose ultimate binary construction was constituted by 'the Orient' and 'the Occident', East and West. Orientalist discourses defined the West in positive terms through a rhetoric that contrasted the West with its antithetical 'Other', the East. The Orient was presented as a space of degeneracy and 'Oriental' peoples were considered inherently primitive and crude. Consequently, the East needed to be civilised by the saving grace of the West and so made to conform to the higher moral standards upheld by the Occident. This orientalist discourse of the inherent superiority of Western civilisation was central to the European imperialist project and legitimised Western colonisation and political domination of the East.

The suffix *-ism* in globalism signals an ideological conception of globalisation. Globalisation—or a certain kind of globalisation—is presented as yet another point (if not the decisive end point) along a chronological line of human evolution. Resistance to the globalisation of capital and corporate ideals becomes, by extension, an unfeasible and backward undertaking. The developed world stages a continuous project to ‘help’ develop the peoples and places that are not yet sufficiently evolved in economic, political, and technological terms to become globalised. Globalism thus generates a division between ‘globalised’ and ‘un-globalised’ which echoes the Self/Other, civilised/uncivilised dichotomies of Said’s Orientalism. Globalisation is not only systemic but also oppressive in nature. Globalisation is managed from within governmental and corporate corridors of power in ways that perpetuate existing (capitalist) power structures.

Meanwhile, the world continues to be divided into distinct territories. The developed world polices its boundaries, keeping at bay and resecting ‘under-developed’ elements which are deemed undesirable or obstructive of a supposedly globalised world order. The discourse of globalism obscures that the globe remains fundamentally divided between First and Third Worlds, between privileged global elites and disenfranchised global masses. The Third World is barred from accessing First World spaces, whether political, economic, or social. Marcuse’s imaging of globalisation involves a strong element of systemic surveillance and regulation. It is a process of coercive order building that produces oppressive hierarchical structures.

In the two panoramas of globalisation, offered by Hardt & Negri on the one hand and Marcuse on the other, the formation of global structures of governance promises either redemption in the form of a utopian network of democratic forces, or the perpetuation of imperialist forms of dominance. Hardt & Negri’s approach traces paths of relation in organic grassroots networks that emphasise commonality across difference in order to articulate new forms of social organisation. Marcuse’s approach emphasises paths of relation between corporate capitalist forces that widen social divides, thus constructing a hierarchical order of rule that conflates financial and governmental sovereignties. While Hardt & Negri’s conception of globalisation is centred on the present and claims to map an inherently new development, Marcuse tracks a historical development wherefrom globalisation emerges as a continuation of the imperialist forces of (Western) capitalism.

Both imagings globalisation are focused on the macrostructures of social organisation and global governance. They are, in other words, representative of a panoramic approach to globalisation studies. However, by capturing two distinctive patterns of relation, one contemporary and organic, the other historical and systemic, Hardt & Negri and Marcuse arrive at two very different conceptions of globalisation. Yet, neither of the globalisation narrative of celebration nor of crisis can adequately account for the diverse responses to, and manifestations of, globalisation.

A more inclusive representation of globalisation is provided by Steger in *Globalisms: The Great Ideological Struggle of the Twenty-first Century* (2009):

I now speak of ‘globalisms’ in the plural, for it has become abundantly clear that the dominant discourse of market globalism has been challenged by coherent globalisms on the political Left and Right. Articulating the rising global imaginary into concrete political programs and agendas, these ideologies deserve their own appellation (Steger, 2009, p. ix).

Notably, Steger speaks of globalisms. He acknowledges the plural sovereignties that compete for the power to influence global flows. His panoramic imaging of globalisation seeks to incorporate the multidimensional characteristics of this phenomenon. Steger does not privilege either the narrative of celebration or of crisis. The undercurrent of corporate and capitalist forces that infuses globalising processes is acknowledged alongside subversive counter-narratives. Globalisation is usefully understood as a process that operates *simultaneously* from the top-down and the bottom-up: A dialectic of systemic and grassroots sovereignties which compete and work in conjunction to influence the direction of flows and to create new circuits.

1.2. The Close-Up. Phenomenological Globalisation and the Global Subject.

In phenomenological globalisation theory, it is generally considered that as the world undergoes a process of reconfiguration from bordered towards networked forms of (social) organisation, so, too, do conceptualisations of the individual experience of being-in-the-world¹⁵. My use of the term being-in-the-world hinges on Heidegger’s ‘*Dasein*’ insofar as this

¹⁵ See: John Tomlinson, “A Phenomenology of Globalization? Giddens on Global Modernity.” (1994); Stephen Crocker, “Depth of Field and the Phenomenology of Globalization.” (2010).

concept considers existence and consciousness in relational terms: ‘Being’ understood neither as a subjective, nor as an objective reality alone, but as a dialectic which sees the subject always in context through his or her engagement with the world¹⁶. In my use of the term I refer to the individual experience of and navigation in time and (social) space. Most theorists of phenomenological globalisation contend that previous ways of characterising being-in-the-world cannot adequately account for the composite experience of the contemporary subject¹⁷. The experience of the subject cannot be captured in terms of embeddedness within clearly delineated territorial, and temporal communities. The present condition of dynamic global flows requires the subject to incorporate a variety of affiliations simultaneously. Identity and belonging therefore cannot be reduced to a singular community, location, or temporality. The global subject is, at any given time, aware of existing as an individual node within an intricate web of temporal, spatial, and social connections. Being-in-the-world, I contend, is now primarily understood as an ongoing process of networking. The global subject establishes and discards personal ties in a continuous process of navigation within alternating and intersecting networks.

Yet, a single-minded understanding of being-in-the-world seen through an optics of fleeting networks is likely to discount the continued significance of personal attachment. The concept of attachment infers, at least, a momentary sense of stability and dwelling through ‘togetherness’. While the experience of the global subject may be described as informed by transient networks, the quest for community persists in the global imaginary, albeit in altered forms. The prevalent influence of communitarian discourses in popular and academic discourses cannot be reduced to nostalgia for the familiar collective ontologies of the past. More conceivably, it manifests a fundamentally human impulse to pursue reliable points of attachment that facilitate orientation in, and navigation of, increasingly fluctuating networks. The following discussion of what I term phenomenological globalisation is centred on the role of community and attachment at a time of unprecedented global flow and transience. It

¹⁶ See Martin Heidegger *Being and Time* (1927).

¹⁷ See Appadurai who famously argues that globalising processes have engendered a global awareness and imaginary: A sensibility that conceives of the subject as an integral part of a world order that encompasses infinite cultural diversity and global connectivity (Appadurai, 1996). Roland Robertson considers how globalisation contributed to a rising ‘global consciousness’, which he describes as an awareness of “the intensification the world as a whole” (Robertson, 1992, p.8). Ulrich Beck conceives of globalisation as having cast into question well-established sociological assumptions about how societies are organised and identities formed (Beck, 2000).

explores being-in-the-world as a dialectics between networking and bordering in the ongoing project of the global subject to retain, in various forms, a relative sense of comprehensibility in a runaway world¹⁸.

In *Community: Seeking safety in an insecure world* (2001) Zygmunt Bauman explores the concept of community. Community, he argues, provides the individual with a stabilising, social context.¹⁹ Bauman distinguishes between ‘the community of our dreams’ and ‘the really existing community’²⁰. ‘The community of our dreams’ exists only as an abstract idea in the global imaginary:

[C]ommunity is a ‘warm’ place, a cosy and comfortable place. It is like a roof under which we shelter in heavy rain, like a fireplace at which we warm our hands on a frosty day. Out there, in the street, all sorts of dangers lie in ambush; we have to be alert when we go out, watch whom we are talking to and who talks to us, be on the look-out every minute. In here, in the community, we can relax, we are safe [...] We are never strangers to each other. (Bauman, 2012, p. 1-2)

‘The community of our dreams’ offers a transcendent sense of embeddedness and dwelling equivalent to the comforting feeling of being ‘at home’. It provides certainty and security through togetherness. These characteristics make ‘the community of our dreams’ a location of desire. The shared understanding among the members of this community is “tacit” and “natural” (Bauman, 2012, p. 11). Their understanding is not sought or produced, but arises organically. For this state of unmediated togetherness to be realised, there are three preconditions which must be met: Firstly, it must be clear who does and who does not belong; the division into ‘us’ and ‘them’, ‘members’ and ‘outsiders’ must leave no in-between cases.

¹⁸ As in Anthony Giddens’ *Runaway World* (1999), wherein globalisation is theorised as a process of rapid change and a collapse of traditional social orders, a development that breeds uncertainty.

¹⁹ Among many other communitarian thinkers, Charles Taylor places a similar emphasis upon the embeddedness of the subject within his or her social context. Being and the individual experience are shaped by a process of negotiation with a wider communitarian context. See for example “The Politics of Recognition” (1994). However, like Bauman, Taylor also acknowledges a need to rethink what community means in an age of pluralism, see “Solidarity in a Pluralist Age.” (2010). Another influential text on the need to re-conceptualise community as a result of globalising processes is Giorgio Agamben’s *The Coming Community* (1993).

²⁰ Bauman’s distinction between ‘the community of our dreams’ and ‘the really existing community’ seems to draw upon Ferdinand Tönnies conceptualisation of ‘Gemeinschaft’ and ‘Gesellschaft’ as distinct modes of social interaction: The actor sees himself or herself as a means to serve the collective goals or destiny of the group *or* the actor sees his or her attachment to the group as a means by which to achieve individual goals. Whereas the former mode of attachment is motivated by the subconscious sense of a strong transcendent bond, the latter is willed and contractual.

Secondly, communication among insiders must be all-embracing so that any communication with the outside seems redundant or unobtrusive by comparison. Thirdly, the community must exist in near perfect isolation from transgressive outsiders (Bauman, 2012, pp. 11-12). Once a prevalent outside presence transgresses the boundaries of community, community turns self-conscious. The balance between 'inside' and 'outside' is jeopardised and the unity of the 'whole' disrupted. Thus, global connectivity, the compression of time and space, mass-migration, and the increasing flow of ideas, capital, and goods challenge the tacit coherence of community. In the global age, the boundaries that define 'inside' as distinct from 'outside', Bauman suggests, are incessantly transgressed and this poses a threat to community coherence. The contemporary moment is one "when the old stories of group (communal) belonging no longer ring true" and the "demand grows for 'identity stories'" (Bauman, 2012, p. 98). In other words, being-in-the-world conceived as embeddedness within stable homogenous communities is challenged by de-grouped individuality. Communal unity and attachment in the age of globalisation are diluted by growing diversity.

If group coherence is retained in 'the really existing community', Bauman argues, it is fashioned through the erection and policing of physical and conceptual borders; instantiations of that which is absent:

Do you want security? Give up your freedom, or at least a good chunk of it. Do you want confidence? Do not trust anybody outside your community. Do you want mutual understanding? Don't speak to foreigners nor use foreign languages. Do you want this cosy home feeling? Fix alarms on your door and TV cameras on your drive [...] There is a price to be paid for the privilege of 'being in a community' – and it is inoffensive as long as the community stays in the dream. The price is paid in the currency of freedom. (Bauman, 2012, p. 4)

Coherence and security in the 'really existing community' is coercively produced through an active suppression of inner discord. Unity is deliberately constructed and performed against what is designated as originating 'outside' the borders of community. The borders that hold 'the really existing community' precariously together are policed to keep in place a semblance of the familiar and the cohesive. The qualities of similarity, permanence, and safety that define the 'community of our dreams' translate as diversity, transience, and suspicion in 'the really existing community'. According to Bauman, globalisation has not engendered a condition of boundless freedom and opportunity for the global subject. Instead, borders are

erected and policed to uphold the ‘really existing community’ in spite of the fact that what these borders contain is insufficient in providing the absolute sense of dwelling epitomised in ‘the community of our dreams’. Community coherence remains a potent figure in the global imaginary and this figure tends to evoke nostalgia and melancholia, a longing for something lost or an unattainable ideal. In *Community*, Bauman describes this myth of ahistorical time which continues to impact on the ways in which we structure and imagine the individual experience in the global age.

Amartya Sen sees a redemptive potential in the loss of community. The really existing community is a bordered and therefore, in Sen’s conception, confining space. Communitarian thinking sees being-in-the-world through a prism of national and conceptual borders. The communitarian approach:

[tries] to understand human beings not as persons with diverse identities but predominantly as members of one particular social group – or community [...] and in effect downplays all other affiliations that make human beings the complex and intricate social creatures that we are. (Sen, 2007, pp. 176-177)

This overriding focus on the individual’s affiliation with a single community or collectivity constitutes a “crude” and “grossly confrontational” mode of classification (Sen, 2007, p. 45). It generates an illusion of the world as a space “split into insular and clashing groups with divergent cultures and disparate histories that tend, in an almost ‘natural’ way, to breed enmity toward each other” (Sen, 2007, p. 43). Community, thereby becomes a location of conflict and demands absolute loyalty from its members. At a time of global flows, however, this outlook is inadequate and performs a “miniaturization of people” (Sen, 2007, p. xvi). Globalisation processes transgress and therefore collapse “the fragmentary logic” of community (Sen, 2007, p. 176). The lived experience of the global subject is a composite of “different associations and affiliations” (Sen, 2007, p. xiii). Consequently, being-in-the-world –or ‘global identity’– must be conceived as “inescapably plural” (ibid.). In Bauman’s ‘community of our dreams’ affiliation is unambiguous and enduring. Sen, on the other hand, argues that individual attachments are confluent, of “relative importance”, and always subject to prioritization (Sen, 2007, p. 19). Through a deliberate process that involves “reasoning” and an advice “choice of identity”, the subject “take[s] note of the social context and contingent relevance of being in one category or another” (Sen, 2007, p. 28). As described by

Sen, being-in-the-world resembles a never-ending series networking acts whereby the subject forms personal attachments. Embeddedness is a variable position, since the subject continuously emphasises useful connections and severs unserviceable ties. Thus, Sen highlights dynamism and volatility as positive aspects of contemporary being-in-the-world. In Bauman's 'community of our dreams', embeddedness and dwelling is contingent upon a sense of unmediated and stable affiliation. Sen defines embeddedness in very different terms. According to Sen, the attachment and disengagement of the subject is informed by a process of negotiation based on reason.

For Sen, this interchangeability of attachments to many different 'communities' is a point of departure for envisioning the world as a totality, no longer as a space divided into bordered factions²¹. Plurality is seen as a general condition which is shared by all members of a supposedly 'global community'. Paradoxically, diversity thus becomes a unifying factor, a common ground that enables communication and collaboration across geographical, cultural, and social disparities²². It remains a valid point for debate, however, whether sameness through difference establishes, in practice, any serviceable foundation for the production of unity. The idea of difference as a unifying factor, a catalyst of (momentary) dwelling, begs the question of what kind of unity and togetherness may emerge from intrinsically transient and unpredictable connections.

Sen's imaging of phenomenological globalisation as a condition of dissolving boundaries and increasing individual agency is, perhaps, more idealist than experiential. Certainly, the title of his work, *Identity and Violence*, establishes a close connection between being-in-the-world and an experience of rupture. The correlation of the words 'identity' and 'violence' indicates that networking efforts to establish personal attachments are subject to coercion and not, in fact, a liberal freedom of choice. Admittedly, a privileged elite has managed at this time to embrace such a networked experience of autonomy through the disengagement from

²¹ See chapter 5, "West and Anti-West" in *Identity and Violence*. Here Sen endeavours to write a unifying history of globalisation that takes its point of departure in a conception of the globe as a unified whole rather than a space divided into disparate civilizations with distinct histories.

²² See also *Cosmopolitanism. Ethics in a World of Strangers*. (2006). In this work, Anthony Appiah presents a similar vision of the world as a whole, where diversity is a unifying factor that breaks down barriers and establishes a global awareness of a shared humanity. Indeed, the branch of Globalisation Studies that is centred on the rise cosmopolitanism generally takes this notion of a shared humanity that transcends all other comparably superficial differences as its point of departure.

community. This elite is described by Bauman as ‘exterritorials’ (Bauman, 2012, pp. 54-55). Financial excess affords the exterritorial subject global freedom of movement and access to technologies that facilitate manoeuvrability within expansive networks. For these select few, celebrative globalisation narratives such as Sen’s, of relative and dynamic attachments, are exceedingly useful. They envision the possibility of constructing a new kind of *temporary* ‘communities’ which originate from strategic networks formed on entirely different grounds than Bauman’s ‘community of our dreams’. These exterritorial networks offer an elusive togetherness, but demand allegiance only under the implicit premise of ‘until further notice’ (Bauman, 2012, p. 41).

However, Sen’s emphasis on ‘choice’ and ‘reason’ discounts the fact that the network is also a power grid. Networks are not necessarily expansive and diverse. As suggested in the discussion of the panorama, or structural globalisation, networks are often highly regulatory. The majority of the globe’s citizens do not enjoy global freedom of movement or increased individual agency. For those who are not part of the privileged global elites, more often than not, the lived experience remains bordered and territorialised. Even the exterritorial, who has purposely disengaged himself from constricting communitarian ties, is influenced both by individual limitations and by external forces which restrict agency and mobility. Sen’s conceptualisation of contemporary being-in-the-world downplays the powerful influence of hierarchical and coercive structures upon the phenomenological experience. To dismiss a bordered or communitarian being-in-the-world as merely an anachronistic, confrontational ontology fails to account for the escalating endeavours to defend and police the borders of community. More conceivably, while networking provides a level of individual agency that community impedes, community continues to offer something essential to the global subject, something which the individualist and networked experience, however emancipatory, cannot provide. We should never underestimate the value of profound attachment that community can offer. Community provides the global subject with a contextualising point of departure, a dwelling place. The border that Sen sees as constricting must is also a productive site that provides insiders with a frame of reference and meaning. In spite of –or because of– community’s propensity to exclude and create ‘others’, it also has the capacity to catalyse personal attachment. The border enables organisation of, and orientation in, an otherwise disconcertingly open space and is therefore a location of desire as much as it is a site of hierarchisation.

According to the distinct close-up perspectives on phenomenological globalisation provided by Bauman and Sen, globalisation constitutes either a critical condition of uncertainty and isolation, or a celebratory state of unlimited freedom of movement. Whereas Bauman's close-up accentuates an impulse for the global subject to reconfigure residual modes of embeddedness within community borders, Sen emphasises a need to embrace emergent modes of boundless and transitory attachment. The former approach focuses on the breakdown of traditional social orders and examines being-in-the-world as an orientational and navigational crisis. The latter approach is centred on emergent levels of connectivity and perceives being-in-the-world as a continuous process of forming new connections.

Bauman and Sen are both preoccupied with the felt reality of the global subject as a dialectics between the individual and the collective, the single node and its various ties to contextualising networks. Yet, both critics adopt a close-up approach to the imaging of globalisation as a phenomenological experience. By zooming in on distinct modes of navigation within geographical as well as social space, one characterised by bordering, the other by networking, they reach two very different conclusions about the impact of globalisation upon being-in-the-world.

I propose that being-in-the-world is a dialectics between acts of 'bordering' and of networking. Bordering and networking are not dichotomous undertakings. The network often operates in ways similar to the border, that is, as a regulatory filter that restricts access for undesirable nodes. In its emphasis on transience and dynamic attachments, the network provides a useful framework for thinking about how the global subject manages and negotiates his or her being-in-the-world. The network focuses on how social organisation changes form. Like community, network entanglement both situates and confines the global subject. The categorical and unmediated attachment and togetherness of 'the community of our dreams' may be beyond the reach of the global subject who must navigate composite networks. Nonetheless, the networked experience has not undone the impulse to seek togetherness and coherence in more durable forms. Rather, now faced with a condition of unprecedented transience, the global subject envisions alternative modes of dwelling which may offer a respite in an otherwise uncertain environment.

1.3. Unfolding a Multidimensional Map of Globalisation.

Globalising processes influence every echelon of the contemporary order, from the organisation of overarching structures to the formation of personal attachments. Therefore, globalisation cannot be reduced to a single hegemony, but must be understood in multidimensional terms. The systemic and grassroots forces of structural globalisation compete for sovereignty to regulate global flows and promote particular patterns of organisation. Simultaneously, globalisation is felt, conceived, and contested on a phenomenological level as well. Individual actors navigate in an environment where the borders that once made sense of social and geographical spaces have become blurred as traditional orders are challenged by inherently new modalities. Being-in-the-world, the engagement of the global subject within his or her immediate context, is increasingly influenced by an awareness and experience of connectivity.

To capture this complex interaction of global and local forces, overarching systems and phenomenological experiences, is an interdisciplinary challenge that seems to call for the invention of an all-encompassing lens that can capture these processes in one image. In the absence of such a device that simultaneously captures the whole and the detail, endeavours to image globalisation necessitate a selective method of study, a perspective that delineates and situates particular dimensions of an irreducible development. The network may be adapted as an overarching analytical framework that serves to emphasise the integral relationship between panoramic and close-up approaches to imaging globalisation. Because network is simultaneously an organisational pattern and a mode of action (to network, *v.*), it potently stresses the extent to which macro- and microstructures are fundamentally entangled and engaged in the process of continual negotiation that shapes globalisation. Unlike Hardt & Negri's conceptualisation of a democratic global multitude and Marcuse's discussion of an oppressive imperialist globalism, the network does not, in its basic etymological meaning, associate a hierarchy, an -ism, or an ideology; nor can it be conceived as an experience that produces individualism and annihilates community. Indeed, community may itself be understood as a particular kind of network although, importantly, a network is not necessarily a community if understood in Bauman's terms of unambiguous attachment. The network is not intrinsically expansive or bordered, emancipatory or regulatory, although it may be managed so as to activate and distribute such qualities through lines of force. Rather, the

network offers a particular approach to imaging globalisation that emphasises engagement and entanglement in structural as well as phenomenological terms.

As we have seen, panoramic theorisations of globalisation are centred on large systems and macrostructures. Therein the panorama seems to represent globalisation from an impersonal and detached point of view. Yet, a network approach to imaging structural globalisation hints at the influence of individual actors, or nodes, upon the configuration of global systems. It punctures imagings of globalisation as an evolutionary or anonymous force of nature. Close-up theorisations of globalisation are concerned with the phenomenological experience of globalisation as manifested in a highly localised web of personal attachments. Meanwhile, the network approach in this context considers that any one network links up with other networks. Thus it adds to the close-up perspective the useful recognition that the global subject exists concurrently within a network of personal attachments and within expansive networks of geographical, temporal, and social ties which, albeit abstract, impact on the phenomenological experience.

Let us now return our attention to the chronotope of the photograph as it has so far been applied to theorisations of globalisation. When the photographer zooms out in order to capture a panoramic outlook, the specific details of that outlook become subsumed by the overall vista. Or conversely, when the photographer zooms in, these details are revealed and given depth, shade, and colour; yet the wider contextual frame of the image turns undetectable. Each perspective, however, calls attention to what is lacking in terms of either detail or context. In a similar manner, any endeavour to image globalisation from either a panoramic or a close-up perspective will invariably call attention to what it leaves out, its perspective fragmentary in and of itself. Conceptions of globalisation as a structural development may be said to apply an eerily detached angle that obscures the influence of individual actors upon the formation of organisational patterns. On the other hand, conceptions of globalisation as a phenomenological development produce only an ephemeral understanding of the global subject, unhinged from the broader overall framework of the organisational patterns that co-produce the global subject. Each of these approaches to imaging globalisation points to a significant absence; the confluent ‘other’ dimension of globalisation that the privileged and only partial focus of the photographic frame, be it panoramic or close-up, disregards.

The following chapters engage with the literary endeavours of Rana Dasgupta and Caryl Phillips to image globalisation processes and they are all based on three interrelated main ideas: The photograph as a chronotopic representation of globalisation narratives that capture a ‘panoramic’ scope or ‘close-up’ manifestations; the network as an organising framework for understanding both structural and phenomenological globalisation processes; and confluence as the pattern that accentuates the simultaneity of how these processes influence the global order and the global subject.

2. The Panorama. Global Networks and Energies in Rana Dasgupta's *Tokyo Cancelled* and *Solo*.

This chapter begins my examination of contemporary literature as a site for the articulation, critique, and construction of globalisation narratives. It examines panoramic perspectives on globalisation as they are manifested in Rana Dasgupta's *Tokyo Cancelled* and *Solo*. I consider the ways in which these works combine a topical attention towards patterns of global connectivity with narrative techniques that generate a 'zooming-out' effect so as to produce what may be described as literary topologies of globalisation. These literary panoramas speak to the theories of Hardt & Negri and Marcuse about structural globalisation which I have discussed in chapter one. However, unlike these theoretical engagements, which have a tendency to construct monistic narratives of either celebration or of crisis, Dasgupta's panoramas incorporate multiple and contrasting narratives. They ask us to think about globalisation as encompassing many different and contradictory strands. I propose that, from Dasgupta's panoramic perspective, globalisation emerges as neither intrinsically heroic nor villainous, but as a network sovereignty that is strategically employed both by forces of virtue and of vice.

Before turning to the specific readings of *Tokyo Cancelled* and *Solo*, I venture a more general reflection on the panoramic perspective in order to clarify its relevance for, and application in, my analyses of these works as literary representations of structural globalisation.

On 19 June 1787, Robert Barker applied for a patent for what is, in photographic history, considered to be one of the first panoramic images ever to be created. Barker called this invention *La nature a coup d'œil*, 'nature at a glance'. Its goal, he asserted, was to present "a proper disposition of the whole, to perfect an entire view of any country or situation, as it appears to an observer turning quite around" (Barker, 1787). Barker exhibited the first panoramic image of its kind in Edinburgh. A circular structure was erected and within it, painted across the curving walls, was a 360° reproduction of Edinburgh seen from Calton Hill. In the centre of this rounded space there was a platform wherefrom the viewer could experience the motif as if standing on Calton Hill looking out over the city. Barker's image was groundbreaking. He had reproduced a field of view which surpassed that of the human eye. The scope of his new medium stretched artistic ambitions to create narratives that

encompassed ever-expanding horizons, to capture immense visual fields within a single frame. A handbill was printed in *The Times* to advertise a subsequent exhibition of Barker's panorama in London:

There is no Deception of Glasses, or any whatever; the View being only a fair Sketch displaying at once a Circle of extraordinary Extent the same as if on the Spot; forming perhaps one of the most Picturesque Views in Europe. The Idea is entirely New and the Effect produced by fair Perspective, a Proper Point of View, and unlimiting the Bounds of the Art of Painting. (*The Times*, 1 April 1789, p. 3)

It was this apparently unlimited scope of Barker's image that most captivated his contemporaries. By a method of 'stitching' together a number of frames, or paintings, an image was created which provided an outlook that was not before accessible. The incomprehensible was made comprehensible in the panorama. Its seemingly boundless perspective earned this visual form the name 'panorama', suggestively comprised from Greek 'pan' (the world, all, everything) and 'horama' (vision, sight, view).²³ The panoramic approach holds an ambition to incorporate everything, to reproduce the motif in its entirety. It presents an inherent drive to create a complete Catalogue of the world. As art historian Angela Miller writes, the panorama:

came to epitomize an international hunger for physically, geographically, and historically extended vision. The panoramic enjoyed a metaphoric reach that satisfied the nineteenth-century craving for visual--and by extension physical and political--control over a rapidly expanding world. (Miller, 1996, p. 34)

Implicitly, there lies in Miller's assertion a supposition of a close link between representational forms and the context from which they emerge. With the extension of horizons and gradual elimination of distance, a visual mode came into being that sought to compress an expansive view into one frame, thus allowing for the imaging of a diverse field of view as a totality. Miller goes on to suggest that what constitutes one of the most powerful characteristics of the panorama is this ability to create a unified vision. Accordingly, the panorama simultaneously opens up the visual field and encroaches it. By envisioning a large

²³ For more information about panoramic images and their reception see "A Panorama Under Construction" in *The Arcades Project* (1982) by Walter Benjamin; *The Empire of the Eye: Landscape Representation and American Cultural Politics* by Angela Miller (1993).

expanse as a whole, held together in a single frame, the motif becomes –in the viewer’s experience of that image– an entity.

Paradoxically, the panorama’s aptitude of compression may also be conceived as a hindrance for its performability as a truly ‘all-encompassing’ perspective. An expansive perspective necessitates a certain distance to the subject. From a distance, the detail is not visible and thus, its potential significance to the larger picture goes unseen. In an attempt to take in as much as possible, significant information is left out of sight. In “Walking in the City” (1984), Michel de Certeau captures this inborn complex of the panoramic perspective:

Seeing Manhattan from the 110th floor of the World Trade Center. Beneath the haze stirred up by the winds, the urban island, a sea in the middle of a sea, lifts up the skyscrapers over Wall Street, sinks down at Greenwich, then rises again to the crests of the distance beyond Harlem. A wave of verticals. Its agitation is momentarily arrested by vision. The gigantic mass is immobilised before the eyes. (de Certeau, 1988, p. 91)

De Certeau here considers the ways in which the city of Manhattan is experienced from the elevated perspective of the distanced observer. High above the streets, de Certeau sees the city spreading out horizontally as “an urban island”. Meanwhile, the structures, buildings, and skyscrapers constitute a vertical imprint that looks to de Certeau like the rise and fall of an ocean. Manhattan appears as an ordered space. Yet, the city also looks like as a mass “immobilised”, a static entity. The peculiar term of phrase suggests that what the high vantage point unveils is but the layout of the city. Life on the ground, the incessant movement and confusion in the streets, cannot be observed from this great distance. Thus, in its physical manifestations, the panorama tacitly admits the impossibility of its own panoptical aspirations. An all-encompassing perspective is a contradiction in terms.

What the panorama offers then, rather than entirety, is contextualisation and clarity. In providing a broad outlook, the panorama can generate comprehensibility and therefore facilitate orientation. It reflects upon the significance of place as it images its subject in context rather than in isolation. Due to its expansive frame, the panorama is well suited to address the subject of global connectivity and of ‘worldliness’, the cognition of the world as a totality²⁴. Its extensive field of vision allows for the creation of narratives with a broad

²⁴ See: Erkki Huhtamo, “Global Glimpses for Local Realities.” (2002).

historical, geographical, and cultural sweep. Moreover, the aporetic nature of the panorama, as described by de Certeau, powerfully conveys a tension between an abstract awareness of global networks and a locally lived experience. The panoramic approach offers a grandeur of scope and an inherent paradox which can, potentially, manifest what may be tentatively termed a ‘global imaginary’.

It is with this quest for a literary form that might capture a global imaginary that Dasgupta’s *Tokyo Cancelled* and *Solo* engage. The two works construct unified, yet expansive visions that call attention to patterns of relation and of rupture across geographical and cultural distances. Dasgupta’s literary panoramas confront and critique conceptions of globalisation in absolute terms of celebration or crisis. In his works, globalisation appears instead in the guise of a new kind of sovereignty, a network power. It is imaged as a precondition of contemporary life, the implications of which are diversely negotiated.

A web-like setup in Dasgupta’s works links up and juxtaposes characters, locations, and narratives. His works do not offer a single Narrative of globalisation, but rather, through a stitching together of stories, or textual ‘frames’, they arrive at a panoramic form, an overarching global network. This net is never singular or static, but expansive and transient. Dasgupta’s representations of globalisation in *Tokyo Cancelled* and *Solo* reify the panoramic aporia: They transmit –indeed, they depend upon– the reality of a global imaginary, yet also communicate the impossibility of capturing such an expansive vision within a single (narrative) frame.

Dasgupta’s narrative techniques take as their point of departure the symbolic language of myth and folktale²⁵. They belong to the genre of romance and cannot be understood in terms of linear logic and realism. A realm of magic and miracle, romance does not describe the world as we see it around us. It is, as Harvey Birenbaum writes, a ‘symbolic form’, “an expression of reality that takes on a reality of its own” (Birenbaum, 1988, p. 201). Romance is at once different from, yet remains continuous with, the reality of life that it expresses, and it needs to be understood in relation to it. Myth and folktale mould reality into

²⁵ While myth and folktale are two distinct generic categories, the difference between them lies primarily in their authority and social function. They make use of similar formulaic techniques and narrative sequences characterised by Northrop Frye as belonging to the genre of romance (Frye, 1976, pp. 8-9). Harvey Birenbaum, too, remarks on the close familial relationship between myth and folktale which, he writes, “overlap significantly” in their “psychological material and their methods” (Birenbaum, 1988, p. xv).

a language of image and metaphor so that “when we look for reality in them, we find the ‘truth’ distorted, or at least transformed” (ibid.). By thus transposing “the immediate sense of life” onto a different level of reality, romance achieves an interpretative “distance from which to see” (ibid.). This distance, or “vertical perspective”, accounts for the tendency in folktales towards a vocabulary of absolutes, of heroes and villains, idyllic and demonic forces (Frye, 1976, p. 50). It is also what facilitates the primary social function of the genre of myth: Namely, its paradigmatic purpose to “explain certain features, [...] laws, social structure, environment, history, or cosmology” (Frye, 1976, p. 9). Accordingly, like the panorama, romance carries an implicit impulse to generate comprehensibility and (social) order.

Dasgupta blends the mythic and the modern. *Tokyo Cancelled* and *Solo* replicate the narrative models of romance. They are “sensational”, or “and then”, narratives; they describe “things that happen to the characters, for the most part externally” (Frye, 1976, p. 46). They do not zoom in on the inner life of the characters, but are centred on the outer chain of events. Secondly, if relatedly, rather than realistic, ‘rounded’ identities, the characters are archetypal. They personify a single character trait and serve a particular function in the story. The characters are components of a wider narrative whole, their relevance contingent upon their position within the story context. Dasgupta’s literary worlds are fabulous. They are at a remove from “the descriptive use of language and the correspondence form of truth” (Frye, 1976, p. 46). Magic and coincidence²⁶ are the primary forces that drive the plot progression. Thus imitating the distancing, symbolic language of romance, *Tokyo Cancelled* and *Solo* are inscribed into an ancient literary tradition. However, whereas romance often takes place in a time ‘long ago’ and in a ‘faraway land’, the characters in *Tokyo Cancelled* and *Solo* originate from recognisably modern settings of High Technology, Hollywood film stars, designer brands, and CEOs. It is the reality of global capitalism and modernisation that provides the vocabulary of Dasgupta’s symbolic images. They emerge from, and must be considered within, a globalisation context. As romance explains and clarifies, we may usefully think of *Tokyo Cancelled* and *Solo* as literary endeavours to map and elucidate the dynamics of a global order.

²⁶ In “realistic fiction the author tries to avoid coincidence. That it, he tries to conceal his design, pretending that things are happening out of inherent probability”. Romance, on the other hand, “is more usually ‘sensational’, that is, it moves from one discontinuous episode to another”. It presents a “vertical perspective” that contrasts the “horizontal continuity” and logic of realism. (Frye, 1978, pp. 47-50).

2.1. Aerial Views. A World of Networks in *Tokyo Cancelled*.

You know friends I don't think we know each other well enough to sit in silence. Have to go through a lot before you can do that. But we shouldn't ignore each other. Don't you agree? Let me make a humble suggestion –maybe you don't agree– but I was thinking just wondering to myself: Does anyone know any stories? [...] Someone spoke: I have a story I can tell. Simple, just like that. (Dasgupta, 2006a, p. 7)

A snowstorm rages and all flights into and out of the airport have been cancelled. Thirteen travellers on their way to Tokyo are stranded in the arrivals hall overnight and pass the time by telling each other stories. The thirteen stories they tell make up thirteen separate 'chapters' in *Tokyo Cancelled*, all of which are held together in the framing narrative of the inoperational airport.

Tokyo Cancelled superimposes a 21st century global outlook on the medieval story cycle known from canonical works such as Giovanni Boccaccio's *Decameron* and Geoffrey Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales*. It is a hypertext in Genette's definition of the term, a "text derived from a previous text" through "imitation" (Genette, 1982, pp. 6-7). The relationship that arises between *Tokyo Cancelled* and these earlier texts as a result of this imitation inscribes Dasgupta's contemporary globalisation narrative into an ancient practice of storytelling. By way of a deliberate application of traditional forms, the text enters into an active engagement with the past. *Tokyo Cancelled* may therefore seem to problematise theoretical definitions of globalisation discourses as being universally future oriented. Significantly, however, in Genette's understanding of the term, 'imitation' involves a process of transformation. While the already existing text serves as a template for the creation of the hypertext, in the hypertext it is transformed, or 'palimpsestised'. Thus, when in *Tokyo Cancelled* ancient storytelling practices sprout from the hypermodern space of the airport, the effect is defamiliarising. The reader recognises the ancient, formulaic elements of storytelling in the text, transposed here onto an unusual context; the airport is not regularly a space of exchange, but of transit. The clash between the mythic and the modern engenders a particular attention on the part of the reader towards the ways in which the text reconfigures traditional (storytelling) structures. *Tokyo Cancelled* makes use of, and converts, the formulaic elements

of romance to signal an engagement with the contemporary moment as a time of restructuration.

Based on its intertextual relationships with figures and motifs from traditional myths and folktales, Ellen Dengel-Janic characterises *Tokyo Cancelled* as a literary exploration of the cultural contact zone wherein tales from diverse traditions come together in the airport lounge. Dengel-Janic focuses on intertextual references to particular “storytelling traditions”²⁷ which, she writes, “are situated in different places across the globe” (Dengel-Janic, 2013, p. 74). The cultural and geographical particularity of the stories is seen as a testament to the storytellers’ diverse backgrounds. The act of storytelling, then, becomes a metaphor for the possibility of establishing “a shared, albeit temporary, community” between strangers across difference (Dengel-Janic, 2013, p. 73). I want to suggest that *Tokyo Cancelled* echoes with familiar tales in this way only to point to their ultimate confusion in the text with other stories from other places to the point that their original, ‘authentic’ sources are obscured beyond recognition. The entirety of the book is narrated in a distanced, heterodiegetic style that makes impossible any differentiation of the individual voices of the thirteen storytellers. *Tokyo Cancelled* incorporates a wide range of intertextual references to folktales, films, literary works, and urban legends from all over the world. The reader will recognise the multiple intertextual references by drawing upon his or her own embeddedness within a global network of texts which are not locally “situated”, and which no longer belong to a specific culture. By activating the reader’s acquaintance with geographically disparate and yet familiar storytelling traditions, *Tokyo Cancelled* exposes how stories travel beyond spatial and temporal diatnecs and enter into an already existing global imaginary. To trace the supposed local origins of the stories, then, seems to undercut the ways in which *Tokyo Cancelled* points to a shared global culture by effectively merging diverse expressions into a single narrative structure.

²⁷ Dengel-Janic identifies for example elements from the Indian *Ramayana*, the *Arabian Nights*, and the Western tales “The Sleeping Beauty”, “Rapunzel”, and “Blue Beard’s Castle”. Dengel-Janic argues for a very specific reading strategy in grappling with *Tokyo Cancelled*, noting that Dasgupta’s “dense intertextuality [...] needs to be decoded with the help of culturally determined knowledge” (Dengel-Janic, 2013, p. 80). In my view, this untangling of influences from “across the globe” which are interlaced in *Tokyo Cancelled* constitutes an unfeasible reading strategy. The approach is fixates unproductively on traditional modes of mapping the world in territorially and culturally bordered terms. Meanwhile, in my view, *Tokyo Cancelled* blends, de-contextualises, and de-territorialises familiar story elements to point to a confusion of cultural and geographical boundaries in a global age.

Punyashree Panda & Sulagna Mohanty write that the imitation of romance in *Tokyo Cancelled* presents “truth as illusion and illusion as truth” (Panda & Mohanty, 2012, p. 15). By thus obscuring the distinction between ‘illusion’ and ‘truth’, Panda & Mohanty argue, *Tokyo Cancelled* creates a fantastical “world of anarchy” that parallels the fragmentary condition of a postmodern world, pointing to its ultimate unrepresentability. This reading of *Tokyo Cancelled* as an expression of postmodern nihilism, however, discounts the ways in which the novel performs a meaningful mapping of global connectivity. The fact that the thirteen stories are set in locations all over the world, from New York to China, and yet eschew elaboration upon the specific character or significance of their setting is a case in point. It is assumed that the audience –and the reader– already possess, at least, an imaginative sense of these geographically distant locations. These thirteen air travellers seem to presume that there is among them what Frye terms a ‘shared legacy of allusion’ to a global culture which surpasses the need for clarification among its members (Frye, 1976, p. 9).

Furthermore, while each of the stories in *Tokyo Cancelled* constitutes a narrative complete in and of itself, it also links up with the other stories in the book through a common focus. The stories cling together by way of a shared motif of metamorphosis and a vocabulary of globalisation to form the expansive narrative structure that is *Tokyo Cancelled*. Dasgupta describes the book as “a picture of the world in fragments” (Dasgupta, 2006b, p. 3): The thirteen story fragments form a unifying vision. When considered in conjunction, they call attention to the echoes between people and places and intimate the reality of a global culture. This culture finds expression in a symbolic language; one which, rather than obscuring distinctions between illusion and truth, makes the reality of globalisation “look like what it feels like” (Birenbaum, 1988, p. 9). As Sharae Deckard suggests, *Tokyo Cancelled* “adopts irrealist aesthetics” wherein “those events which seem most dream-like or surreal are those which are most real and felt” (Deckard, 2012, p. 11). Far from postmodernist unrepresentability, then, the fabulous character of *Tokyo Cancelled* is representative of an ancient storytelling tradition. It operates through the symbolism of romance to convey “an expression of reality”, the purpose of which is to illuminate and explain, to order rather than to confound.

My analysis of *Tokyo Cancelled* is divided into two main sections, “The Hub” and “A Network of Stories”. The first section comprises my reading of Dasgupta’s airport as a metaphorical microcosm, and indeed a chronotope, of a global order. The second section provides close readings of four of the thirteen stories; “The Tailor”, “The House of the Frankfurt Mapmaker”, “The Store on Madison Avenue”, and “The Changeling”. I suggest that each story is structured around a particular premise emerging from globalisation discourses.

“The Tailor” examines globalisation as financialization. It envisions globalisation as the redistribution of power and significance onto capital in an unscrupulous global market. “The House of the Frankfurt Mapmaker” represents globalisation in related terms, as rationalisation. Globalisation appears here as a systemic network, the single purpose of which is to regulate and optimise the speed and velocity of global flows. Accordingly, these first two stories in *Tokyo Cancelled* are globalisation narratives of crisis. They are stories of the disconcerting spread of inhuman ‘values’ at a time governed by global capital.

“The Store on Madison Avenue” and “The Changeling” are contrasting globalisation narratives of celebration. Like “The Tailor”, “The Store on Madison Avenue” is focused on the forces of capital. However, “The Store on Madison Avenue” sees the transfer of sovereignty onto capital as having allocated power and agency to the informed consumer and entrepreneur, who uses this influence ethically for personal gain and for the good of others. The story represents global consumer culture as a potentially liberatory, even democratic, force. Finally, “The Changeling” explores globalisation as social action. Globalisation emerges in this story as a grassroots network, through which creativity and innovation spreads spontaneously.

These four stories in *Tokyo Cancelled* exemplify how, making use of the symbolic language of romance, *Tokyo Cancelled* performs a panoramic mapping of globalisation processes wherein network powers of vice and of virtue operate confluent, and even interdependently.

The Hub: A site of transit or exchange?

John Kassarda & Greg Lindsay write about airports that they “represent the logic of globalisation” (Kassarda & Lindsay, 2012, p. 7). They see it as a microcosm of the global order, an embodiment of mobility, efficiency that produces ever-increasing comprehensibility

and control. In *The Textual Life of Airports* (2011), Christopher Schaberg, too, describes the airport as a space that offers useful insights into the dynamics of a global age, noting for example that “airports encapsulate certain ideas of modern life” (Schaberg, 2013, p. 1). However, while both Kassarda & Lindsay and Schaberg invite us to gage from the airport important clues as to the dynamics of the contemporary order, their individual readings of the airport differ in significant ways. Whereas Kassarda & Lindsay see the airport in a positive light, a figure of connectivity, Schaberg sees it as an ambiguous place. Airports, he writes, are “sites where identity is confirmed or questioned; they are spaces of public display; they are contested zones where privacy and national security vie for priority; they are complex factories for the production of patriotism and the privilege of mobility” (ibid.).

As we shall see, the airport in *Tokyo Cancelled* is an amalgam of excitement and apprehension. It embodies mobility and efficiency as considered by Kassarda & Linday, but it is also a soulless site, the panoramic scale of which causes alienation. In “Arrivals” and “Departures”, the global hub is governed by technological artifice. It overwrites natural patterns of motion and rest to facilitate continuous movement and thus triggers isolation rather than exchange. When the snowstorm puts the airport ‘out of order’, however, the forces of nature reclaim the airport for a time. They interrupt an otherwise perpetual movement and create a moment of unexpected respite.

My analysis of “Arrivals” and “Departures” is centred on this moment of interruption as a carrier of creative potential. I show how, in a cyclical imagery of death and rebirth, “Arrivals” and “Departures” epitomise a moment of transformation. The stranded passengers form an organic network of stories that temporarily cancels the anonymity and artificiality of the airport. Conviviality in the form of storytelling counteracts the dehumanising and divisive machinery of the airport, or global management. “Arrivals” and “Departures” are, in other words, a story about the power of grassroots networks and human connections to subvert the potentially destructive forces of systemic globalisation.

Dasgupta’s airport is a nameless site “in the Middle of Nowhere”; “a place that was Free of Duty but also [...] devoid of any egress, like a back corridor between two worlds, two somewheres” (1). It is an exterritorial and generic realm, almost an alternate reality suspended between the places left behind by the passengers and their future destinations. *Tokyo Cancelled* thus iterates Pico Iyer’s assertion that the airport is “a non-place, an interval of

sorts [...], a rare interregnum – a place between two rival forms of authority” (Iyer, 2000, p. 41). According to Iyer, it is an anonymous space, single-mindedly dedicated to transit; one that generates disorientation. It induces a “no-mind that belongs to the no-time, no-place of the airport, that out-of-body state in which one’s not quite there, but certainly not elsewhere” (Iyer, 2000, p. 59). Marc Augé also defines the airport as a non-place, or a no-where; “a space which cannot be defined as relational, or historical, or concerned with identity” (Augé, 1995, pp. 77-78): It is devoid of local identity and can be constructed anywhere in the world. In the non-place, social interaction and emotional attachment have been replaced by individualism and solitude. The spread of such non-places on a global scale, Augé writes, is a symptom of the elevation of speed and efficiency to cardinal virtues, and of the resultant demise of communitarian, humanitarian principles. Dasgupta’s airport emerges as precisely a non-place of decontextualisation and deterritorialisation, where local specificities are supplanted by anonymity and isolation. As Dirk Weimann argues, the airport in *Tokyo Cancelled* functions as a “chronotope” of the global, incorporating the central characteristics of “de-localisation, contractuality, textualisation, [and] solitude” (Weimann, 2009, p. 3).

Force majeure in the form of a snowstorm cancels the airport’s “normal eschatological machinery” (1). The peculiarly casual juxtaposition here of the word ‘normal’ with ‘eschatology’ ironically correlates trite routine with the ultimate and divine destiny of humanity. With this invocation of eschatology, the text draws directly upon the realm of myth: In theological terms, eschatology is concerned with the final events in the history of the world and with God’s definitive plan for mankind. It presents the end of the world, or the end of time, and also infers the advent of a new era. Dasgupta’s airport is “eschatological” in the sense that it is a non-place, existing at a remove from the outside world. It manifests ‘the end of time’ or ‘the end of the world’ insofar as it revokes matters of time and geographical distance. It inserts the passengers into an ‘out-of-body’ state, as noted by Iyer. Here, mankind has ascended to a god-like level, endowed with the power to (artificially) manipulate the parameters of time and space. The ever-increasing connectivity that air travel represents has ironically turned the airport into an ‘exterritorial’ space disengaged from ‘earthly’ matters, that is, from contextualising realities. This artificially sustained condition of mankind’s technological mastery over his environment has become the norm. In the minds of the passengers, the interruption of this machinery constitutes a terrifying reversal of the ‘natural’,

or “normal”, order of things. The passengers “clamoured for a hearing for their unique Woes” (2). The passengers’ behaviour, their “heads in hands” and “bloodshot eyes towards heaven” (ibid.), conveys no small degree of despair. They cannot understand that their complaints are to no avail. As the airport representative explains to them, “[w]e cannot argue with the weather. These things happen” (2). Nonetheless, technology seems to have attained such power and potency in the global imagination that it is presumed by the passengers to trump any natural order. As their call upon heavenly forces suggests, the snowstorm comes to resemble not a ‘natural’ event, but a supernatural, even divine, intervention that topples their world-view.

The capitalised and “unique Woes” emphasises the fundamental importance that the passengers ascribe to their respective plans. It amplifies the seriousness of what is, in fact, but a delay of “a few hours” (5). The passengers perceive of themselves as “unique” and sequestered individuals, satellites afloat in an aerial nowhere. Accordingly, the airport is indeed a space that is “Free of Duty”; one through which travellers move without a sense of obligation or affiliation with other passers-through. As in Augé’s conception of the non-place, Dasgupta’s airport performs a sequestering of the subject from any sense of community. To the airport representative, however, the “queue” of passengers looks like a “crowd” whose “wave of foul language gushed from their several mouths [...] and crashed over him full of lonely feelings and terrible thoughts” (3). It appears to him as one creature, a serpent on the attack; the passengers’ protests a “snaking, spitting vitriol” (2). Their supposedly ‘unique’ complaints are presented in a blur that drowns out individual voices. Though the passengers do not yet realise it, they are, temporarily, a group formed by their shared predicament of being suspended in transit. The situation establishes a transient common ground and a connection between them.

Upon the cancellation of the flight to Tokyo, the airport assumes an air of deadly urgency, resembling an “emergency ward” (1). The captions on the departure board proclaim “frantically – TOKYO CANCELLED TOKYO CANCELLED TOKYO CANCELLED –” and “the packed baggage carousel squeak[s] like an anxious heartbeat monitor under the weight of hundreds of suitcases it had not been expecting” (3). The captions form an unceasing, inaudible scream that bewails the disaster of temporary stoppage. Meanwhile, suitcases accumulate like a fatal thrombus at the heart of global jet travel. It threatens with

ischemia that might extinguish the life of the airport. The passengers seem to consider the continued operation of the aerial hub a matter of life and death and the temporary delay of their flight as a near-deadly blow. The airport appears as a 'living' body, or entity, the life of which is threatened by the blockage of people who pass through its corridors. This bodily imagery eerily endows the soulless machinery of the airport with a life of its own. It conveys a confusion of artifice for nature and of inanimation for life.

The snowstorm switches off the autopilot that allowed the passengers to travel senselessly, each consumed by their private plans and destinations. The interruption of artificially sustained movement by the forces of nature effects an awakening:

People were Taking Stock. Tokyo tomorrow night means I have to spend a couple of days there God I've always wanted to see Tokyo! The snowstorm was like a wall across a highway that brought cruise control to a whiplash standstill: but as you thought about it there were ways around it, through it even, and the other possibilities started to seem more, well, *felt*. (4)

The analogy of a solid wall erected across a fast-paced highway stresses the violent experience of the interruption that happens when the superhuman speed of jet travel comes to a screeching halt. It is a traumatic incident, the impact of which is likened to a whiplash. The comparison suggests painful disorientation, but therein also hints at a concomitant need to reconstitute a sense of the surrounding environment. The airport is temporarily inserted into a corporeal, or 'grounded', reality when the passengers begin to "Tak[e] Stock". They consider their situation and calculate alternative routes. As a result of this reconfiguration, what the passengers initially considered a disaster of epic proportions becomes instead a welcome opening unto "possibilities". The event expands the passengers' before narrow-minded horizon.

The fatal seizure of the baggage carousels comes to foreshadow not death, but rebirth, since "the mutant seed of *force majeure* was already sprouting up through the edifices of cherished Plans, cracking the walls and floors until they crumbled in a cloud of dust which, as it cleared, revealed something new" (ibid.). The passengers are no longer in control of their journey. A natural order, "force majeure", has been reinstated which requires the passengers to surrender to the unconquerable forces of nature. This natural order is fittingly described in an organic imagery as "sprouting" vegetation that erupts and shatters 'cemented' plans and

reclaims sovereignty. The natural imagery pleasantly contrasts the jarring and dysfunctional machinery of the airport. The passengers wonder, “was it not at times like this, when life malfunctioned, when time found a leak in its pipeline and dripped out into some hidden little pool, that new thoughts happened, new things began?” (255). Whereas the airport was expectedly a fleeting touch down, a speed bump on the way to somewhere else, it has morphed into a stopping point. Paradoxically, the non-place meant solely for passing through becomes a site for respite and reflection, and so, potentially, for innovation.

In the “dead of night” (293) Dasgupta’s airport is ominous, even gothic. It is “half-lit”, “depressing and dead”; the baggage carousels are “still and silent”, and “[s]ecurity people with guns and military uniforms” patrol the expanse, reminders of a lurking but yet unknown danger (5). Iyer observes that in such “anonymous spaces” as the airport, people are “surrounded by the familiar totems of The Body Shop, The Nature Company, The Sharper Image” which serve as temporary navigational markers in an otherwise unnervingly generic space (Iyer, 2000, p. 43). In the microcosm of the global order, global brands, representative of the power of corporate and consumer culture, are endowed with substance and special significance. However, in Dasgupta’s airport, with the takeover by a natural sovereignty, these commercial anchor points are eclipsed: The “Duty Free stores” are “closed” and “CNN’s airport news service and grandiose light boxes advertising American Express and *The Economist* flickered, and became dull” (4-5). Without the constant flicker of the commercial spectacle of the airport, the passengers have nothing to distract them from their suspension in limbo in the gloomily silent arrivals hall. Yet, the closing of the “Duty Free stores” encouragingly foreshadows the passengers’ reawakening onto a more convivial, solidary mode of travel than their before ‘Duty-Free’, exterritorial state of mind.

Save for a few phone calls which constitute the only remaining connection to an intangible outside, there is nothing familiar to help the passengers get their bearings:

You could not tell how big the night was outside. The windows were expressionless and gave little away. Beyond the glass, a floodlight bathed the empty tarmac in orange, and drew from the darkness a swarm of immense insects that flew madly and erotically into its unresponsive stare. A welding machine glared intermittently in a far-off hangar [...] Somewhere at the very edge of

hearing, there was the sound of megaphoned voices that ranted with passions too inaudible for hearing. (131)

The sights and sounds of this aerial realm are distant and robotic. Underneath the spectacle of global connectivity manifested as perpetual movement and consumerism, the airport, now out of order, uncannily reveals itself as an inhuman and artificial realm. It appears as a wholly self-contained plane. The windows are “expressionless and [give] little away” (131), obscuring the world outside the exterritorial hub. The passengers experience a distended sense of time: “[Y]esterday seemed weeks ago and tomorrow still many inky aeons in the future” (293)²⁸. Thus lacking any “obvious egress” and with no situating sense of time and space there is nothing to keep the airport and the passengers ‘in place’. The airport is but “an echoey expanse” (169), at once claustrophobic and vertiginous.

Appropriately, Iyer calls the airport a “realm of spaced-out dreaminess” which invokes a strong “sense of unreality” (Iyer, 2000, pp. 59;42), iterating the dreamlike state of mind that also envelops Dasgupta’s thirteen passengers. Their “[d]iminished senses played tricks, were those bats fluttering outside the windows or just the twitching blind spots of minds too slowed to render reality in all its detail?” (293). The passengers’ disorientation produces “an inexplicable need to stay close, as if during the reconstitution of themselves around this new Situation a sort of kinship had emerged. They moved towards the chairs like atoms in a molecule” (5-6). The “kinship” between the passengers provides a contrast to the intimidating space of the airport. The term hints at a warm, even intimate connection. Yet, this particular kinship is not rooted in longstanding acquaintance or in familial bonds; the passengers are temporarily and accidentally bound together by a shared experience.

A “semi-circle of chairs” becomes a makeshift centre of storytelling wherefrom an imaginative global movement begins. “[E]veryone faced each other on rows of chairs, three sides of a square” (6); their “well-calculated rows had been compromised during the night for closer listening (379)”. Symbolically, the rigid order that normally governs the airport is disrupted and rearranged. The circle of chairs “in the middle of the airport” (381) presents a provisional centre and anchor point. The passengers share “peanuts” (6) from vending

²⁸ Schaberg writes about the experience of ‘dead time’ in the airport. It is a state of endless repetition of programmatic actions, sensations, and enunciations which generate the apathetic feeling that time stands still. See Schaberg, pp. 53-67.

machines and the security guards “settled into an epic chess tournament” (223). Thus sharing a meal and playing games, these strangers engage in forms of exchange as old as time. The hypermodern context of global jet travel blends with ancient forms of human interaction. Through their exchanges the passengers establish a convivial social space where “[o]nlookers smoked cigarettes and discussed moves [...] the audience applauded enthusiastically [and] [t]here was good humour and heated discussion” (223). The stories, games, and conversations generate a pleasant atmosphere that, for a time, dispels the unsettling feel of the airport. Dasgupta comments that “the airport is an obvious meeting place for a group of contemporary travellers. But it’s also a cold and intimidating space to spend a night in, and it seems to demand of the stranded travellers that they fill it with stories in order to make it habitable. The airport can therefore be a place to stage storytelling as the most primordial communication between human beings and the unknown” (Dasgupta, 2006b, p. 3).

An epitome of a global order, the airport valorises speed and efficiency to the point that it becomes void of, even deliberately overriding, a human perspective. The ties it establishes are ‘dead’ links to other non-places. Yet, this is an artificially induced reality and depends upon an operational technological machinery. When this systemic machinery breaks down, a more ‘original’, grounded existence takes over; one that is characterised by the enduring human impulse to connect on a deeper level.

The thirteen stories shared by the passengers alter the airport. Echoing loneliness and isolation give way to affability. Like “atoms in a molecule”, the passengers come together to form an entity, a network. Personal ties are established through the sharing of stories which constitute impromptu anchor points in the no-place no-time of aerial displacement:

There had been a long time for them to look at each other. To find depths in faces that had seemed conventional a few hours ago [...] One man followed the patterns in the hair on the forearm of the woman next to him [...] he wondered what life lay behind the strange story she had told. Was it his imagination or did her body creep closer as the night progressed? Was there not some significance in the way their eyes had met? (255)

This passage attests to a general curiosity and a will to *know* the other stranded passengers. It hints at an intrinsically human instinct to connect. Suddenly out of order, the airport has been subjected to the rule of a mythical slow-time that allows room for careful observation. The

passengers notice minute details in each other's faces and attempt to discern from them the personalities and life histories behind them; to reach beyond the surface and gain a deeper understanding of each other. Yet, these ruminations remain unfulfilled. Essentially, the passengers remain strangers to each other. Relatedly, Weimann notes that "the passengers begin to tentatively form a completely anonymous community whose every member appears only as a story" (Weimann, 2009, p. 6).

In spite of its transitory and anonymous qualities, the network of passengers shares genuine kindness and conviviality between them. Their stories leave a space open for communication and reflection. They engage the listeners in active interpretation. Whereas the passengers were before consumed by their private worlds and unique "Woes", here each character wonders about the others and the stories they tell. Through their spontaneous exchange they are thus transformed from solitary 'passengers' to "fellow travellers" (91). The passengers "are able to perceive of themselves as a group only when they are no longer protected by the contractual solitude of the supermodern non-place; or, positively put, no longer overdetermined by the atomising dictates of jet-age travel" (Weimann, 2009, p. 6).

Even when the airport reawakens on the following day, the passengers remain as a unified group for some time:

They all got up together to stand in the check-in queue. People asked questions: What time will we arrive? – So what are you going to do in Tokyo? Where are you staying? – It's your first time? Wow. You'll love it. It's like no other place! – And remind me where you said you were from? – Things worked smoothly this morning and they were all ready to board. Funny how they all still clung together, a big, ungainly group (381)

Whereas their queue looked like a menacing serpent on the previous day, the passengers now converse congenially with each other. Instead of being consumed by private concerns, they ask about the further journeys and homes of fellow travellers. Accordingly, although the impersonal machinery of the airport is restored, the events of the night have a lingering effect on the passengers. They retain from their experience a more human perspective on the world and seem to navigate through the airport in an altered state of calm affability. The stories have left a tangible imprint, suggestively recorded as a corporal memory: "[S]omehow the long night persisted in the cavities of their bodies: an aftertaste whose comforting blackness shut out, for a brief while, the onset of day" (379).

The passengers are sundered once more as they “stood in a silent single file” (382), waiting to board the aircraft. They resume the positions of the day before as they move from the convivial circle of chairs that established a group dynamic to standing separately in a ‘single file’. The members of the group are systematically severed when “a machine suck[s] up each boarding pass, flashe[s] a name for an instant, and [spits] back a diminutive stump” (ibid.). The eschatological machinery of the airport performs yet again an amputation of personal and relational attributes. The dismembered boarding passes represent the identities of the passengers who, once more consumed by the impersonal apparatus of the airport, are reduced to a jumble of names digitally displayed in quick succession. While boarding the plane they are greeted individually and mechanically by the “flight attendants” with thirteen identical “goodmorning[s]” (383).

While the symbolical microcosm of the airport initially seems to generate an infinite number of connections between geographical locations, it also severs more profound connections between people and places. The airport brings people into close proximity, and yet it is not a relational space. But in the moments of interruption, when this ‘inhuman’ order of speed and velocity defaults, a contrasting, convivial form of connectivity takes root. As the passengers board the plane, their airport experience during the night has morphed in their minds. The disproportionate primacy they ascribed to the principles of speed and velocity at the beginning of “Arrivals” has dwindled. The cancellation of these impersonal principles was before perceived as a grave calamity. Now it is casually, even optimistically, referenced as the “whole ridiculous fiasco – it really hadn’t been so bad. A good story to tell, after all” (382). The delay, which was at first experienced as a fatal setback, is here dismissed as a comical event. The moment of interruption has provided time for reflection and engendered an important insight: The significance before ascribed to globalisation as speed and systemic efficiency is uncovered as illusory. It is supplanted by an embrace of globalisation as communication and exchange between people on a grass-roots level. The new day is “full of new things and the air was so fresh” (382), a cheerful, confident contrast to the chaos and gloom of the previous night. Clearly, the organic network of stories which sprouted from their encounter has effectively dispelled the “lonely feelings and terrible thoughts” (3) that absorbed the passengers at the beginning of the narrative. Although their kinship is a fleeting one, they carry within them the seeds of a new story to tell.

The airport itself, however, remains an imposing and ambivalent site. As if resuscitated after suffering the thrombus during the night, the airport once more “began to respond to time” (379). In the morning, hectic activity and mechanical time usurps the qualitative slow-time that engendered storytelling and listening; “the big black board twitched into life with cascading destinations and to-the-minute timings that made you sit up and take command of yourself, made you realize that the machinery of the world was starting again, it wasn’t going to wait for you any longer!” (380). The airport is brought back to life and spins the passengers back into an automated, exterritorial ‘world machinery’ wherein speed and velocity are the governing principles.

The darkened windows that created the illusion of the airport as a self-contained vacuum are lit by daylight, revealing the world outside:

Small mutant vehicles emerged gingerly from hiding places and scurried smoothly around in the dawn haze; airport workers arrived with untimely energy, clambering around familiarly under the distended steel bellies of aeroplanes like a litter of playful newborns. Far away, over the other side of the concrete and scrub, a gelatinous sun wrestled briefly with the horizon before soaring free, summoning the birds to their first meandering flight of the day, and bathing in orange the township of tarpaulin and corrugated iron that nestled up against the airport’s wire fence. (379)

The airport resumes an energetic, effective order. Seemingly by their own volition, vehicles ‘scurry’ forth from unknown locations like robotic insects. The aeroplanes assume the aspect of living metallic creatures. The imagery of airport workers as the playful spawn of aircrafts uncannily presents humanity as governed by, even helplessly reliant on, these vast machines. Figuratively, rather than providing increased control of navigation and manoeuvrability, these epitomes of hypermodern speed have surpassed the authority of their creators. This unsettling imagery reflects an eerie world order governed by a systemic, automated perspective, a human perspective eerily absent.

Importantly, however, the steely aircrafts are juxtaposed by natural and beautiful denizens of the sky: The rising sun and birds in flight. The passage conveys a simultaneity of artifice and nature that attests to the ambiguous character of the airport, and, by extension, of

the global order, as a world wherein systemic and grass-roots forces, and ‘inhuman’ and convivial practices, vie for supremacy.

On “the other side” of the airport expanse, a dismal township of makeshift shelters serves as a testimony to great poverty and offers a potent contrast to the realm of privileged global jet travel. These two worlds inhabit the same geographical space, yet are disjointed by a wire fence that demarcates an unyielding border. As Iyer notes, “barbed-wire fences and armed guards separate those on the ground from those lucky enough to be flying in or out. The stranded ones peer through holes in the fence at the blessed ones able to be part of the global village” (Iyer, 2000, p. 55). Alongside Dasgupta’s thirteen passengers, “middle-aged women with headscarves and mops started to trace epic shiny corridors from one end of the floor to the other, shaking themselves free of detritus – plastic cups, newspapers, baggage tags – each time they turned around” (5). The airport workers struggle to be free of the excess waste produced by the inhabitants of the ‘global village’. Indeed, the detritus threatens to absorb the workers and assimilate them within the disposable mounds. The depiction of “epic corridors” evokes the feel of a vast palace wherein a host of grounded servants work around the clock to ensure the comfort and convenience of their airborne masters. It hints at a vertical order which, in spite of the ultra modern context of air traffic, bears a disconcerting resemblance to residual, even feudal, forms of inequality.

Deckard sees the airport in *Tokyo Cancelled* as a microcosm of the ‘world-system’ divided between global ‘cores’ and ‘peripheries’ (Deckard, 2012). Cores, Deckard considers, are urban centres of power and their peripheries are those “environments [that] suffer heightened resource extraction and environmental degradation” (Deckard, 2012, p. 1). The world-system that Deckard sees mirrored in Dasgupta’s airport thus agrees, to some extent, with my own reading, identifying the representation of globalisation in *Tokyo Cancelled* as an uneven development. Yet, it is important to also recognise that the different levels of this hierarchical order exist within the same space of the airport. They are not territorially dispersed or clearly distinguishable in terms of geography. Dasgupta’s airport seems to epitomise a world wherein any demarcation of absolute boundaries between inside and outside is a problematical endeavour indeed. Since, as Connell observes, in *Tokyo Cancelled* “even the most remote locations connect to the global networks of communication and trade” (Connell, 2014, p. 1), there is effectively no territorial outside or periphery to the global

system. Instead, Dasgupta's airport presents power centres and peripheries in a new and different way: in *Tokyo Cancelled* 'cores' and 'peripheries' may more usefully be seen as referring to different levels of connectivity. It is no insignificant point that network visualisation software is often programmed to position the node with the most connections at the centre of the web, while the nodes with very few or no connections are placed at its periphery. The more connections a node has, the more it can influence other nodes, and the more 'central' it is in determining the overall structure of the network. In a global order that, like the airport in *Tokyo Cancelled*, revokes matters of time and space, it is access, not location, that is the dominant structuring principle. The demarcation and policing of borders becomes, in effect, a problematical, if not altogether impossible endeavour.

Deckard contends that *Tokyo Cancelled* depicts the oppressive and disruptive forces of globalisation, manifested as "neo-liberal [...] regimes" and "new forms of exploitation" (Deckard, 2012, p. 5). In Deckard's reading, the novel epitomises "the world-ecology" as "disrupted by neo-liberalism and financialization" (Deckard, 2012, p. 1). Certainly, *Tokyo Cancelled* does critique globalisation as a process that generates austere social divides. This critique emerges implicitly from the stark contrast between the grounded cleaning staff and the air travellers, and in the juxtaposition of the high-tech airport and the corrugated shelters erected on its fringes. In the grand scheme of global flows that the airport represents, the personal, or human, perspective has a tendency to evaporate. The result, it appears, is an intensification of inhuman practices and an augmentation of hierarchical social structures.

However, Dasgupta's airport incorporates also an alternative and more positive vision. In spite of its dangerously inhuman aspects, it is nonetheless this eschatological machinery of the airport that brings the thirteen travellers together from disparate parts of the world. And it is when they appropriate and convert the airport expanse that the possibility grows that they may yet convert it to an exciting place of innovation through storytelling. The representation of the airport as an eerie, lifeless space is coupled with an imagery of organic growth and conviviality. The social interaction between the passengers transforms the otherwise unsettling space of the airport. The airport becomes instead a relational, 'grounded' site that sprouts new potentials. Through their meeting, the passengers' horizons expand. They carry away with them thirteen new stories "to tell", an important term of phrase that foreshadows future encounters. The passengers travelled initially with a single-mindedly narrow focus on their individual concerns and destinations. In the end, however, they are open

to new encounters which they see as opportunities for further storytelling. Dasgupta's airport therefore cannot be read merely a dismal manifestation of the destructive forces of global capitalism, nor, indeed, as a triumphant emblem of connectivity and human ingenuity. Rather, in mingling two different kinds of connectivity, one soulless and inhuman, the other lively and convivial, the symbolical microcosm of the airport calls attention to "the inequalities of globalization" and recognises "globalization's unevenness" (Connell, 2014, p. 15). It renders the contradictions of a global order which brings both new disparities and opportunities.

A Network of Stories

The stories that take form in Dasgupta's airport may be described as comprising a mythology of globalisation. Myths, Frye writes, "stick together to form a mythology, a large interconnected body of narrative that covers all the religious and historical revelation that its society is concerned with" (Frye, 1976, p. 9). The thirteen individual story units stick together to form the narrative unity that is *Tokyo Cancelled*. They are stories about globalisation as the structuring paradigm for explaining emergent forms of connectivity today. The themes around which they revolve constitute some of the most prevalent subjects of public and academic debates at this point in time. Accordingly, Frye observes that "myths take root in a specific culture, and it is one of their functions to tell that culture what it is and how it came to be, in their own mythical terms" (ibid.). Dasgupta's thirteen tales spring from and transmit a global culture, the images and metaphors of which are shared between the thirteen air travellers. Each story serves an explanatory function as it illuminates a particular aspect of globalisation.

"The Tailor. The First Story."

Prince Ibrahim arrives with his entourage in a small town and commissions the local tailor to make a robe. This robe must be more extravagant than anything the tailor has previously created, and it must be made according to traditional craftsmanship and design. The tailor works day and night; he studies ancient traditional techniques and takes up loans to purchase the finest materials. When after four months he arrives at the palace in the capital to deliver his robe, royal guards deny him access. For years he stays in the city, growing increasingly destitute until he meets the Prince by coincidence. To protect the robe until a time when the Prince might agree to see him, the tailor buried it in the desert. In the meantime, the robe has been excavated and seized as an alleged treasure from the 18th century. It has been sold to a

museum in France. Since the tailor cannot procure the robe, the Prince renounces him as a fraud and claims that he does not recognise him. One day, the King holds an open audience and the tailor presents his predicament. The tailor is redeemed and reimbursed and lives out the remainder of his life in a seaside town, sewing clothing for sailors.

Through a series of juxtapositions, “The Tailor” explores the infiltration of local, convivial practices by processes of financialization that translate everything according to economic ‘value’. The most significant of these juxtapositions is between the Prince and the tailor. While Prince Ibrahim personifies an economic elite of consumers, the tailor embodies the labourers and producers who have, for better or for worse, become dependents in a world defined by the global market. This first story in the cycle that is *Tokyo Cancelled* addresses the links between residual and emergent forms of inequality. The economic elite exerts its power through new global networks and by means of new technologies. However, these networks bear a disconcerting similitude to old hierarchies. The ultimate authority continues to rest with a small ruling class of financial potentates

With focus on character and on the distinct geographies inhabited by the Prince and the tailor, respectively, the following analysis considers how “The Tailor” represents a transition from economies of production to economies of consumption.

The tailor’s hometown is recognisably rural and provincial, a stark contrast to the country’s metropolitan capital city:

The ramshackle streets of the outskirts of the city finally gave way to open countryside. The smooth, proud highways built under the reign of Ibrahim’s grandfather began to loop up into the hills and, as the morning mists cleared, the city boys looked out on spectacular scenes of mountains and forests. (9)

The city’s “ramshackle streets” are juxtaposed by the comparably beautiful, natural scenery of the countryside. The marked difference between the worn-down cityscape and the serene landscape establishes that the Prince’s capital and the tailor’s province constitute two alternate realms, each with a distinct dynamics. In the tailor’s province, daily life plays out in and around the town square: The village that is erected around this small centre consists of “small houses” and in the streets there are “children playing and women sweeping, stalls piled high with fruit and vegetables, and shops of shoemakers, butchers, and carpenters” (11). Livestock,

townsfolk, narrow streets, inns, and locally based businesses make up the tailor's village. The wares on offer in the market, and the way in which these wares are displayed, convey an organic and unassuming ambience. The wares in the market are artlessly “piled” and they are all essentials of everyday living, related to the basic activities of eating, walking, and building. The shops are small and owned by local craftsmen; there are no commercial or corporate brands in sight. The setting invokes the atmosphere of an archetypal town market, of unhurried and convivial commerce and exchange. It is also implied that the town is comprised of a small and tightly knit community, since “news of the fabulous order had immediately spread across the town and the quiet tailor had acquired new fame” (12) upon Prince Ibrahim’s commissioning of the robe. The very local character of the tailor’s province is further accentuated when the Prince arrives in the main square:

The scene was all polo shirts and designer jeans amid the slamming of car doors, the stretching of limbs, the pissing behind bushes - and the townsfolk quickly assembled to find out who these visitors were. ‘Certainly they are film stars come to make videos like on MTV,’ they said to each other as the band of young men strode onto the main square of the town, sun glaring from oversized belt buckles and Italian sunglasses. (10)

Despite the ancient storytelling frame of *Tokyo Cancelled*, the display is emphatically modern and reflects a world very much like our own; one of global flows of capital and consumer culture. The Prince’s intrusive parade of expensive cars and designer brands provides a compelling contrast to the provincial backdrop of the province. The congenial atmosphere of children playing and women sweeping is abruptly broken by the jarring sound of slamming car doors. An intrusive authority of global capital, here in the form of consumer culture, has invaded the countryside. The Prince and his entourage symbolically mark this usurpation of the local town by urinating on the ground: A crude demonstration of dominance at odds with their otherwise ultramodern spectacle. What is hinted at here, and further solidified throughout the story, is that a strong link exists between past and present, primitive and modern, forms of domination.

The Prince, a personification of the new authority of global capital emerges from a metropolitan setting very different from the hometown of the tailor. Thus, in the “busy streets” of the metropolitan marketplace “trestle tables were juddered and clacked into

readiness” and “a procession of vans spilled forth the goods that would festoon their surfaces: sparkling brassware, colourful fabrics, beeping alarm clocks, and novelties for tourists” (13). While life in the province was hurried and peaceful, the capital is “busy”. Whereas the tailor’s local market exuded conviviality and harmony, the city market has an impersonal and jagged feel. Its sounds are mechanical and its wares inorganic. The wares in the town were related to everyday essential activities. The city market, by comparison, holds only ‘wondrous’ items, the usage of which is tied to activities of leisure and enjoyment. Only the alarm clocks have an everyday practical function. However, the alarm clock belongs to a modern context at odds with the representations of the tranquil town. It serves an agenda of efficiency that disrupts natural patterns of sleep and wakefulness, mechanically breaking an otherwise qualitative experience of time into hours and minutes. The inanimate trinkets are not, as in the town market casually left in an artless “a jumble”. They are carefully displayed so that they “festoon” the table surfaces, conveying opulence. Clearly, the metropolitan market is a place of diversion and indulgence that promises immediate gratification to its consumer.

The commodities in the metropolitan market arrive in vans from unknown locations to cater to a wide range of tastes and desires. Tourists are its returning, even principal, customers and, in the interest of profit, the market has adapted to accommodate their presence. Commerce is not associated with local or situational exchange. Indeed, its consumers and commodities are ‘out-of-place’ in the metropolis, invariably arriving from an unknown elsewhere. Accordingly, the Prince’s capital is a site of dislocation and mechanical, impersonal transactions. It carries a strong and suggestive similarity to the anonymous airport in “Arrivals” and “Departures”, iterating the central juxtaposition in the frame story of nature and artifice.

To the tailor, the capital seems, at first glance, to be a place of boundless possibility:

[T]he tailor felt elated by the crowds. ‘What wonders can be achieved here!’ he thought to himself. ‘Everywhere there are great buildings housing unheard-off forms of human pursuit, new things being bought and sold, and people from all over the world, each with their own chosen destination [...] What clothes might I have made had I spent my life here!’ (13-14)

This initial impression of the vast opportunities on offer in the capital, as opposed to what the tailor perceives as the limitations of his own province, furthers the juxtaposition between the

countryside and the city. Scope and expansive horizons are introduced through the tailor's eyes as yet another feature that separates rural and urban experiences. The tailor's exuberance about city life stems from the urban layout, its "great" buildings which suggestively reach for the sky. He interprets the presence of "people from all over the world" as a confirmation that this is a global hub of celebrative cosmopolitanism, a place of diverse converging strands.

Yet, for many of those who dwell in the capital, it is not, in fact, their "chosen destination". Indeed, when the tailor is himself reduced to poverty, he comes to understand that the metropolis also has a dark side. Due to his insurmountable debt, he cannot return to his old life in the village, nor can he go elsewhere. He has been effectively 'immobilised' by forces that are outside his control, primarily by a lack of capital. It is no insignificant point that in order to regain even a relative degree of autonomy, the tailor must be restored to a position of financial independence. His presence in the city is not a matter of choice; neither can the capital be rightly considered his "destination", a word that denotes arrival. For the tailor, arrival is suspended. The apparently unlimited scope of the global city covers over a highly restrictive network of control and management. Paradoxically, then, the metropolis is an ambiguous site that incorporates a simultaneity of movement and stasis:

He trudged under spasmodic street lights, and gazed into shadowy shop windows where mannequins stood like ghosts in their urban chic. Everything seemed to be one enormous backstage, long abandoned by players and lights, where dusty costumes and angular stage sets lay scattered amid a dim and eerie silence." (15)

The tailor no longer "walks with purpose" (14) but "trudge[s]" aimlessly and wearily. His movements are restricted and, as a result, he is transformed from urban explorer to metropolitan drifter. From his altered subject position, the city appears to him in a new and eerie light. Ghostlike mannequins people the shops and fitful lights lend only brief, artificial illumination and relief to the gloomy setting. The lights are "shot through with the black orbits of flies" (15), an ominous sign that behind its glamorous spectacle of festooning wares and busy shoppers, the metropolis is also a 'rotten' and decadent place. From this perspective the metropolitan marketplace is suddenly an eerie, lifeless site made uncanny by the absence of shoppers and vendors. The capital is a place of illusions: A mechanical "stage set" that mimics, but does not replicate, the lively trade of the local market in the province. What seems initially to be dynamic cosmopolitan exchange is, in fact, but an impersonal transaction of inanimate objects.

Whereas the tailor's movement is constrained, the Prince travels freely both within and outside the city limits. His tour to the countryside consists in a smooth car ride of but a few hours, his mode of travel differing markedly from the tailor's strained journey and withheld arrival. In "Capital Gains" (2009), Dasgupta explores the amalgamation of the metropolitan city and the ultimate authority of capital as manifested in Delhi. He notes, "In a society as stratified as this, it is possible to imagine that the ones at the top of society enjoy endless freedom [...] For most people in Delhi life remains gruelling and deprived, the inconceivable promise of the global market unfulfilled, and this feeling of perpetual deficit lets in apprehensions of a vampiric ruling class, sucking the plenitude away from everyone else" (Dasgupta, 2009a, p. 3). Indeed, the Prince's capital city epitomises such discrepancies and iterates Dasgupta's play upon the suggestive double meaning of the word, 'capital'.

Prince Ibrahim makes spectacular performances of consumer culture which signify that he has a degree of wealth reserved for Bauman's exterritorial elites. In the Prince's capital city, economic opulence manifests in the boundless freedom of movement that the elite enjoys. This exterritoriality flourishes within the modern metropolis, which as we have seen is a place informed by overall dislocation. In the figure of the Prince, residual and emergent forms of domination and control are conflated. Princely authority translates into financial spending power. An outmoded feudal hierarchy of aristocrats and serfs is linked to contemporary economic power structures. The new order of financial inequality is, to a large extent, defined by inheritance or ordinance, since capital flows freely only within restricted networks of economic elites. Power is passed down not through bloodlines, but through networks of capital. Notably, the new aristocracy of consumers also have the power to control the movement and access of their dependents. The Prince's refusal to buy the robe traps the tailor and keeps him firmly 'in place'.

The commodities in the metropolis are manufactured elsewhere and the routes by which they arrive in the metropolitan market is indiscernible. The processes of production by which they are created are obscured by an illusion of ready availability. Therefore, there is in the city no sense of the accountability that spending power entails. Apparently, though the consumer exercises an immense power both within and outside the global marketplace, he is able to

avoid any sense of ensuing social responsibility. The Prince has little regard for the amount of time, capital, and labour involved in the creation of the robe. For the tailor, the robe represents “the achievement of a lifetime” (11). Its extraordinary value derives from the intricate mode of production and the highly specialised artisanal skill that were required to make it. The Prince, on the other hand, considers the worth of the robe in consumerist terms. It is to him a commodity and an object of desire. He appraises “this is a fine piece of work [...] There are too few people in our country who have respect for these old traditions” (ibid.). Yet, his admiration and ‘respect’ derives from the power of the robe as an aesthetic object to engender a desire for acquisition. In the displacement of the robe from a provincial to a metropolitan setting, from a local to a global context, it has undergone a process of de-contextualisation and financialization. Once it enters the realm of capital, its meaning transmorphs from livelihood into fashion. Imported into the metropolitan market the robe can no longer be distinguished from the comparably trite “novelties for tourists”. As self-proclaimed “specialists” classify the robe as “royal ceremonial wear from the 18th century”, it is irrevocably dislocated from its original context (17). With authoritative voices these hijackers place the robe firmly in the past. Thus, it is no longer recognised as the result of an active effort to keep alive ancient artisanal skills. In a highly ironic gesture, the robe is mistakenly categorised as a historical artefact, a token stand-in for tradition. It is lost in translation and severed from any lived experience. It has, in metaphorical terms, become yet another prop in the superficial spectacle that is the global marketplace.

Prince Ibrahim embodies globalisation in the form of financialisation. He translates every input with reference to entertainment ‘value’ and immediate gratification. He is the archetypal tyrant, a personification of a capitalist globalism run amok by convenient historical amnesia. Nonetheless, his initially strong desire to possess the robe does suggest that he has a deeper longing for continuity with and connection to the past. Tradition, epitomised in the tailor’s careful application of ancient styles, provides such a connection whereby “all the sections fitted together without a single break in the pattern” (11). As we have seen, in the local setting of the province, time is not quantitative or measured in terms of efficiency. The tailor spent considerable time perfecting the unique pattern, creating a smooth transition between breaks that might otherwise have been caused by the stitching together of separate cuts. Similarly, living tradition is continually constructed and reconstructed through a gradual ‘stitching’

together of past and present moments into an unbroken narrative. In the metropolitan marketplace, defined by rupture and transience, this is indeed a rare and therefore 'valuable' commodity. It provides a momentous contrast to the expectation of instant gratification which is representative of consumer culture. However, at the moment of this transformation from practice to object, tradition is severed from its original meaning. Paradoxically, if turned into commodity, tradition loses the value or allure that consisted in its ability to produce a sense of stability through continuity.

In an imagery of local/global relationships, the tailor initially represents a highly localised practice, associative of an experience of temporal and cultural continuity. In archetypal terms, he is the artisan and cultural custodian, ensuring the continuation of traditional techniques of production. Yet, the tailor undergoes an archetypal transformation from Artisan to Vagrant to Recluse. The capital is a place of darkness and chaos where original meaning and identity is torn asunder to be reassembled in new constellations. Possibly, tradition survives as practice, albeit in a broken form, as the tailor carries within him the skills of his trade when he leaves the city. There is some potential continuity to be found in the modified practice of his trade for new purposes. Yet, this adaptation is born out of his struggle for survival in a hostile environment and arises from an imperative need to rework painful rupture into useful experience:

He took up residence in a distant seaside town where he made a living sewing clothes and uniforms for sailors. In the afternoons, when his work was done, he would sit by the shore looking into the distance, and tell stories to the masts of boats that passed each other on the horizon. (21)

While the tailor was ardently consumed day and night by the creation of the robe, his sewing is described here as "work" to be "done", thus indicating a dispassionate and detached approach. Following his encounter with global capital, his vocation is one of mechanical production rather than innovation. Through a process of dislocation from a local to a global context, the tailor is transformed from artisan to labourer. Known throughout the narrative merely as 'the tailor', his identity is defined in terms of the anonymous function he serves within the global marketplace. Instead of rising to the fame of a designer who creates expensive global brands, he is assimilated as one of the indistinguishable labourers who ensure a continual influx of products. Rather than creating unique and individually fitted

designs, he is employed in the mass-production and distribution of uniforms. Notably, the uniform serves a function of turning individuality into similitude.

In a similar manner, Prince Ibrahim's display of designer labels allows the townsfolk immediately to identify him as belonging to a privileged elite of exterritorials. Thus, recognised even in the provincial setting of the tailor's town as attributes of authority, these brands have a 'uniform', even global, meaning. Indeed, Dasgupta suggests that "the contemporary array of brands [...] supplies a useful code of social status" (Dasgupta, 2009a, p. 1). In "The Tailor", European and American labels have circumvented the globe as the sceptres and crown jewels –the emblems of power– of the 21st century. Industries of mass-production and the global circulation of recognisable brands intimate a strong connection between globalisation and homogenisation. Through a continuous process of branding, the narrative universe of "The Tailor" is divided into a hierarchy of consumers and labourers, exterritorials and adscripts, which is at once similar to, and yet different from, previous forms of inequality.

The progression of the story imitates a zooming out movement resembling that of a camera. Thus, the story takes its point of departure in a 'close-up' frame of the tailor's local village. The outlook then broadens as the reader follows the tailor's journey to the capital, a bustling global hub of commerce where distant parts of the world converge. The perspective becomes, finally, panoramic when the tailor sits at the shoreline and gazes into the distance. From here, he observes the waterways that connect continents and hint at a global network of continuous exchange that reaches far beyond the horizon. Symbolically perched in a liminal position on the brink between land and sea, the tailor gazes at the ocean which simultaneously connects and separates different locations. He is thus depicted at once as a part of, and as separate from, a global context. By producing uniforms that circumnavigate the globe, he contributes to a worldwide network of commerce. However, this peripheral position is assigned to him by the forces of global capital that effectively removed him from the metropolitan centre of power. Although he has physically escaped the metropolis, the power of capital is de-territorialised and it asserts a continual influence. The inanimate and distant masts cannot receive, nor transmit, the stories that the tailor tells them. His 'conversation' with far-away places is, in fact, a soliloquy without an audience. His engagement with the global is near invisible and, to a large extent, imagined. Beyond the impersonal trade of commodities from

the seaside town to the global market, there is an absence of exchange and dialogue. In spatial terms, the tailor remains a firmly localised, though also severely displaced, character whose experience of the global is invariably manifested somewhere beyond the horizon. He personifies a global perspective expressed primarily as an abstract imaginary, an emerging awareness of playing an unintelligible part in a wider narrative. Thus, in the wake of global capital, other forms materialise which operate through alternate and often obscure circuits. The tailor represents a globalisation narrative that takes a local and contextualised point of departure, one which apprehends the potentially global ramifications of local practices of financialisation. Globalisation, it would seem, operates also as glocalisation; that is, in relation to and filtered through locality.

In “The Tailor”, old centres of power and their peripheries have mutated. Systems of coercion perpetually foster hierarchies of social inequality, albeit in altered forms. As we have seen, these simultaneously ancient and novel power structures are epitomised in the modern metropolis, a symbolic microcosm of globalisation as financialisation. Notably, the market in the province is locally situated; its shape and stock is determined by the immediate needs of the townsfolk and the size of the town. The metropolis, however, is defined by the forces of the market. The metropolitan marketplace has gone global and outgrown a situated geographical location. It has expanded until a point when it engrosses the entire capital so the market is the city and vice versa. In this narrative, the metropolitan centre of power is characterised by deterritorialising practices. In order to ensure a fundamental liquidity of capital and commodities, everything that enters the global marketplace is dislodged from its contextual significance. Meaning is translated invariably in terms of monetary value. Thus, the priceless robe turns into a commodity; the artisan becomes a labourer; and individuality assimilates into uniformity. There is a strong sense that a vast system of financialisation is in production wherein every single element is strategically modified to expand the power of economic elites while ensuring the continuous dependency of the working classes. This system expertly combines previous hierarchies of inequality with an agenda that promotes the unobstructed liquidity of capital and commodities through restrictive networks. These networks of control and management are effectively masked by a spectacle of cosmopolitan exchange. Accordingly, the capital at first glance appears to hold limitless possibility and celebrative diversity, but it is, eventually, exposed as a location of unfulfilled desire and

exclusion. In contrast to previous forms of domination, the sovereignty of global capital does not ascribe to identity narratives of nationality, race, or culture as principal markers of difference. Indeed, in the metropolitan setting which engenders fundamental de-contextualisation and dislocation, these narratives are no longer meaningful. Instead, self and other, insiders and outsiders, are defined in economic terms. Individual agency and autonomy is depicted as being contingent upon capital. The authority to access and influence the global marketplace is determined by financial spending power.²⁹

“The House of the Frankfurt Mapmaker. The Fourth Story.”

Corporate spy and mapmaker Klaus Kaufmann travels to Turkey on business. His car breaks down in the Anatolian desert and a local woman rescues him from dehydration in the sun. She brings him to her home, a cave, where she nurses him back to health. She asks Klaus to be a husband to her daughter Deniz. Deniz has no voice but communicates telepathically. Klaus does not agree to the old woman’s entreaty, and yet Deniz arrives one day unexpectedly at his doorstep. Klaus reluctantly installs her in his home in Frankfurt, but instructs her never to enter the room in the highest tower of the house. Deniz disobeys and sees that the room holds a map of the speed and velocity of global networks. Klaus finds Deniz a job as an illegal worker, a maid in a hotel. She discovers that the hotel is, in fact, a stopping point along a global trade route that specialises in the trade of humans. Undocumented migrants are transported along this black market network as workers, prostitutes, adoptive babies, and organs. Klaus feels that Deniz has become a liability to his business. She knows too much and is beginning to make friends in the city. However, before he can decide her fate, Deniz desperately throws herself through the glass wall of the tall tower and, presumably, dies from the fall.

In “The House of the Frankfurt Mapmaker”, corporate forces have constructed a world order of rationalisation, symbolically illustrated in Klaus’ map. The map presents the globe as one overarching corporation. It is Klaus’ business “plan of the planet” (93) and it translates all in

²⁹ “The Tailor” revolves around the overall theme of the forceful usurpation of the local by the global through oppressive practices of financialisation. Accordingly, while I would contest Deckard’s overall reading of *Tokyo Cancelled* as a work that depicts globalisation in exclusively disruptive and exploitative terms, “The Tailor” does, in fact, articulate the themes identified by Deckard.

terms of velocity and turnover. Through processes of rationalisation, this global corporation resects all elements that do not directly add to the smooth running of the industry. Since the industry incorporates the entirety of the globe, however, there can be no easy disposal of this resected excess in remote dumping grounds, and so, a side-business continuously reprocesses undesired leftover into useful production units.

The following analysis is centred on Klaus' map as symbolising a new order demarcated by corporate networks rather than geographical borders. Tracking the individual journeys of Klaus and Deniz, I read the Fourth Story as a globalisation narrative about a hierarchical global order that resembles that of exterritorial travellers and grounded service workers in Dasgupta's airport. This order combines, yet separates two individual networks: One offers luxury and mobility to privileged elites; the other constitutes the work force of the global industry. Thus, two alternate systems operate interdependently; one employed in the service of the other.

Like the panorama, Klaus' map provides contextualisation and control. By envisioning a large expanse as a totality, the map appropriates the space it reproduces. Relatedly, Graham Huggan shows how, in striving to provide mimetic and objective information, cartography may be considered as an analogue for the acquisition, management, and reinforcement of (colonial) power (Huggan, 2008). Yet, Huggan's conception of the map relates to a colonial perspective, the map a symbolic representation of a territorial sovereignty. Klaus' map, by contrast, is produced from a de-territorialised and global outlook.

With reference to "authoritative information" (94), it proclaims the advent of a new world order defined by boundless liquidity:

Klaus would say in his many presentations to corporations and governments, 'people have been taught to believe that Mercator's canny distortions show the world as it truly is. But we have no more need of his deceitful coastlines: we are not a people bobbing about in the unknown looking for land. Which of us, in seeking to travel from Frankfurt to Singapore, spends a moment thinking about problems of navigation? The world is already ours, and what we truly care about is not its shape, but its speed.' (112)

Paradoxically, Klaus' worldview decrees the birth of a new global condition while also implicitly inferring a colonial legacy. Remarkably, his use of the inclusive "we" attests that he

considers himself a peer of world leaders. Comprised of corporate elites and government officials, the makeup of his audience intimates a disconcerting conflation of corporate and governmental sovereignties. Seemingly, a corporate elite has infiltrated the world's corridors of power. Klaus' declaration that "the world is already ours" confirms that the usurpation of global sovereignty by corporate forces is a *fait accompli*. Yet, his self-proclaimed ownership of the world is not legitimated by a claim to cultural or racial superiority, as was European imperialism. Klaus' rhetoric of 'we the people' does not refer to a national or ethnic bond, but to a shared experience of exterritoriality.

Mercator's map facilitated geographical navigation and thereby contributed to imperial expansion. It was rooted in territorial concerns and imaged the globe invariably in relation to Europe, symbolically placed at its centre. While Klaus' map retains this power to envision spatial ownership, it is defined by a de-territorial perspective. Like Robert Barker's panorama, his map is displayed around the walls of "a large circular room" (111). Thus, iterating Hardt & Negri's conception of 'Empire', his world order establishes no geographical centre of power, nor does it demarcate a periphery. The map incorporates the entire globe under "a single [corporate] order of rule" (see chapter one):

Every piece of useful information about a place could be reduced to a single parameter – what he called 'velocity' [...] Coastlines there were none; but since the sea was all but empty of markets, it was generally a smooth and mysterious grey-black, while the continents displayed themselves as a constantly mutating patchwork. (112)

The absence of boundaries in Klaus' map emphasises the liquid character of his worldview. The map epitomises prevalent conceptions of globalisation as flow. Even the landmasses are not fixed, but mutate according to market developments. The cartographical reconstruction envisions mass and substance as transitory, occurring in the form of continuously changing hubs. It revokes spatial barriers and speeds up flows, therein evoking David Harvey's seminal discussion of globalisation as an experience of time-space compression (Harvey, 1990). The narrative of globalisation as de-territorialisation and flow here comes to serve a corporate agenda to seek out "new frontiers for extraction and appropriation" (Deckard, 2012, p. 2). It leaves no place on Earth 'off limits'.

The peculiar phrasing that the map includes every piece of "useful" information intimates a significant absence. The map's "authoritative" status is made further suspect by

Klaus' self-proclaimed title of "collector" (100), as if the information in question were merely unearthed or discovered; an objective truth. In fact, Klaus' information is highly constructed, invariably filtered through his subjective ruminations on what is authoritative and useful.

Rather than a geography of territories, the map shows a topography of systemic networks:

[P]eople made things whose purpose [Deniz] could not even imagine: valves, adhesives, tubes, lenses, pumps, plastic pellets, nylon tiles, rubber seals, steel gauze, springs, washers. They sold houses and prosthetic limbs and elegant clothes. They bought books and money and cars and guitars and other people [...] and if you did not want whole people you could buy pieces: for there were hearts and kidneys on sale, and livers and slices of skin and corneas and foetuses [...] love, too, could be bought in Frankfurt (113-114)

This map displays an all-encompassing system that strips its components of originary, contextual significance. Thus, people are converted into spare body parts and human relationships are reduced to purchasable fleshly mechanics. There is no ethical distinction between invaluable human life and inanimate commodities; the map considers all in terms of corporate performability. The map performs a macabre procedure that dissects individuals into soulless items of merchandise. The overhead list of hardware, including "adhesives", "valves", "tubes", and "pumps", relates to sanitation systems. It attests to a thriving business that specialises in the management of flows through regulatory procedures.

The map is described in a bodily imagery. It is "cracked with a filigree of red and blue lines representing the various corridors and checkpoints of the world that converge here and there in matted inflammations like the pulsating chambers of a heart: air routes and sea routes" (112). The map depicts sea routes as a cardio-vascular system and "air routes" as a respiratory system. The cartographic physiology suggests that corporate globalisation has developed into an autonomous superorganism. The 'business-world' has taken on a life of its own. It subsumes everything into an artificially regulated world-system, the sole purpose of which is to rationalise and effectivise global capital flows. The map establishes a metaphorically 'inhuman' order governed by uncompromising effectivisation.

Significantly, the cartographic body is "written over with a scurrying swarm of texts and symbols too dense even to make out" (ibid.). This digital swarm looks like a mass of

crawling insects and hints at internal. This virtual disintegration of the map indicates that the global corporation it surveys and sustains is by an imminent collapse.

It is no immaterial point that the room in which the map is displayed is “made entirely of frosted glass” (111). The frosted glass obscures the world outside. The map thus turns its gaze inwards. It is fixated on the dynamics of global markets, with “a blithe indifference to the landscape which sits beneath [and around] it” (Connell, 2014, p. 11). Rather than providing clarity and transparency, then, this particular map leaves out important details as to local particularities. It is situated in the highest tower in Klaus’ house, at the end of a staircase that “spiralled upwards and upwards” (125). In theory, this elevated position offers Klaus a panoramic, and therefore empowering, outlook. However, it is completely absorbed by matters of business and therefore also oblivious to more ‘earthly’ concerns. Klaus lives, quite literally, with his head in the clouds. His map creates the illusion that the exterritorial world of corporate flows exists as a self-contained realm. Like the glass onto which it is projected, this single-minded world-view is brittle, and vulnerable to unforeseen impact.

Klaus’ mode of travel is equally representative of his exterritorial experience. As part of his mapmaking enterprise, he routinely traverses the world without ever encountering a barrier. He “travelled: Singapore, Madrid, Johannesburg [...] life returned to normal” (104). His alternation between metropolitan locations appears almost as a series of rapid teleportations and is made possible by his access to state of the art technology. Klaus does not “linger” in “the places he visit[s], but he liked the sense of momentum that he got from carrying out his purposes against so many different backdrops” (125). The word ‘visit’ suggests a brief and non-committal engagement. By contrast, the idea of staying in one place for a period of time is here considered “lingering”, a term that intimates ineffectiveness and procrastination. The sole purpose of Klaus’ travels is business. Unlike the tourist, he does not travel for diversion and has no interest in an authentic local experience. His destinations are exotic frameworks, the foreignness of which serves but to heighten his sense of continuous movement. He has no interest in the geographical and cultural particularity of the environments he moves through.

Wherever he travels, Klaus never actually leaves home behind. He checks into “the Sheraton Ankara Hotel”, which promises to be “Everywhere A Home Away From Home”; he rents a car from “Hertz”; and in his car he listens to German opera “Duke Bluebeard’s Castle”

rather than to the local Turkish music (95-96). Transnational hotel corporations and car rentals enable him to journey around the world without ever having to leave the comforts of home behind. Klaus finds himself thousands of miles away from Frankfurt, yet he brings nothing with him on his travels except for a lightweight carrier and a laptop. Clearly, his wealth buys him access to technologies and conveniences that render all other luggage superfluous. Klaus purposely disengages himself from local influences. Thus, while driving through the Anatolian landscape in his rental car, he reverts any sensory impact coming from the outside:

He switched on the air conditioning. Soothing air began to hiss all around him, cooling the interior to a comfortable 21°C [...] Next to the 21 on his dashboard was a 48 coming from outside. He realized he had not paid the journey enough thought, had not so much as put a bottle of water in the car. (96)

The electronic equipment transforms the unwelcome heat of the desert into “soothing air”, but the hostile hissing sound with which this conversion takes place indicates that the technological system is under great duress from the outside environment to keep up the artifice. Meanwhile, a “voiced GPS” (ibid.) eliminates potential difficulties of navigation. It plans his designated route with decimal precision. By the means of expensive technologies, Klaus thus confidently traverses unfamiliar distances without having to pay attention to his surroundings. He is focused solely on his destination. He has not taken the journey itself into account, nor has he considered the conditions of the Turkish desert and the possibility of obstruction. Like the stranded passengers in “Arrivals” and “Departures”, he is accustomed to a mode of travel that allows him to “leap” and “jump determinedly” between urban destinations (96). In his experience, it is the privileged traveller, not the natural environment, who controls the journey.

Klaus’ confident movement between local backdrops is representative of a more general practice of perpetual oscillation that also defines the interior design of his house:

No natural light entered by the windows, merely the pale glow from more flat-screen panels that supplied fantastical landscapes as if from the outside: today a snowy vista of German firs [...] tomorrow a tranquil scene by the Ganges [...] speakers delivered the sounds of these changing worlds into the room, and Klaus’ morning newspaper and coffee were read and sipped to the sound of drumming of

the monsoon rain on forest leaves or the soulful air of a Chinese street musician
(103)

Like the room of frosted glass in his tower, his house turns in on itself. It looks remarkably like the anonymous airport in the frame narrative in *Tokyo Cancelled*: It is a self-contained and artificially regulated realm. Klaus alters the appearance and ambiance of his vast house to match his shifting desires. His wealth affords him a technology that puts him in complete control of his environment. The seemingly coincidental apposition above, of the digital projections and the recorded sounds, attests to Klaus' blatant indifference to their contextual significance. Like his map and his travels, they comprise a constantly shifting backdrop, the sole purpose of which is to sustain an illusion of perpetual, speedy movement. His projections are "fantastical" and thus firmly situated within the realm of fiction; they separate Klaus from his concrete environment.

Whereas Klaus masters his self-contained world, Deniz and her mother "live at the mercy of the rains" (101). In their cave, Deniz' mother explains, the natural cycles of their environment define the rhythm of life. Deniz' mother explains to Kaufman that there "are olive trees all around. I grow wheat and vegetables and keep goats. I have this cave which is cool in summer and warm in the winter [...] there have been times when we too have nearly died. When we have sucked the stems of bitter plants to get moisture" (100-101). In Klaus' map, the area where Deniz and her mother live is shown as a blank space, except from "menacing mosquitoes that signified malaria" (114). Klaus inaccurately depicts the site as *terra nullius*, ready to be utilised for his own corporate purposes. Yet, the land can be accurately read by the initiated and is, in fact, full of life and activity. Whereas Klaus oversees the world from the heights of his glass tower, Deniz' mother sees the land from the grounded perspective of a farmer. Her cave is deeply rooted in the Earth as an integral part of the landscape and symbolically presents a local experience. Deniz and her mother possess the local knowledge of the land crucial for survival. They are self-supporting by necessity; everything they have, they produce in communion with the land. The cave and its surroundings present a contrast to Klaus' virtual reality of ready availability, his fridge being "always full" (104) and his flat "stocked automatically" (106). In Klaus' house, highly developed technologies conceal a repressed dependency upon a continuous influx of products from a veiled outside. Klaus

watches squeamishly as the old woman prepares a meal of small birds, the process appearing to him like a brutal murder:

She struck off the head of the first bird with a quick flick of her knife and held it over the bowl for the blood to drain. Klaus tried not to watch [...] She [...] pulled out all its organs in one deft stroke, and dropped them into the bowl. Her knife worked quickly in her glistening hands, it glinted and gyrated and ran with little tides of dark blood and Klaus' head began to turn again. (98-100)

His apparent distaste is ironic when considered alongside the macabre dissections of people into body parts in Klaus' own profession. In the cave, Klaus is confronted with the concrete process whereby the birds are converted into food. His stopover in the Turkish countryside has deposited him in a domain where the routes of all products from source to consumer are transparent and contingent only on serving basic human needs. The interior of the cave is modest; "clean and sparse: a wooden wardrobe packed with clothes stood to one side; there were two chairs and a table, and an assortment of steel pans arranged neatly by the entrance" (98-99). Deniz and her mother live a life of hard labour and scarcity. However, juxtaposed with Klaus' house of artifice and its macabre images, their cave is described in ways that convey a natural beauty. The walls of the cave are for example:

covered with a blanket of pink butterflies that moved together as if they were woven, thousands of wings ceaselessly shifting like one big collage of different hues, fluttering sometimes for space within the throng, hovering above it to find a different spot; and, as he watched, more butterflies flew in from outside and joined themselves to the iridescent tapestry. (98)

Contrasted with the grim swarm of digital texts that covers Klaus' map on the walls of his tower, these butterflies on the cave wall emanate life. Potentially, they may be read as an alternate map of global connectivity; one that conceives all as simultaneously separate (each butterfly with a distinct hue) and connected (woven together in a weave). The butterflies make up an organic and vibrant network, wherein the incessant movement of separate nodes is "fluttering" and unpredictable and thus wholly different from Klaus' regulatory vision.

The laborious life of Deniz' mother and her deep connection with the land are inscribed upon her body. Klaus notices that her "toes were bony and splayed" and her "skin was shiny with wear and latticed with dark lines" (99). Her toes are spread out as if flattened against the

ground by a heavy load, symbolically conjoining her with the land through a tangible, sensory contact. She personifies a grounded perspective according to which “useful information” is rooted in personal experience and acute attention to the immediate environment. Klaus, however, does not master this territorial geography, which is governed by the laws of nature. Yet, in the cave, he experiences a temporary shift of perspective as he, too, is submitted to this physical reality and to an authentic bodily response:

A damp film of sweat across his chest that caused the breeze to feel cool [...] Hands. [...] Patiently absorbing the accumulation of fire within him. Cold cloths on his head. Wiping the heat from his armpits and soles of his feet. Eddying the air around him with silent movement. [...] After a while he noticed that his body was breathing. The restful tide in his nostrils, the swelling of his chest. Around him was darkness. He was lying on a mattress on the ground. (97-98)

Dengel-Janic argues that “without the help of [Klaus’] technological props [he is] reduced to bare existence” (Dengel-Janic, 2014, p. 82). Thus removed from his technological simulations, Klaus senses rather than observes his surroundings. In the car, he was soothed by hissing air conditioning. The cave, on the other hand, provides no such technology. Klaus relies instead on his body’s natural defence against overheating: Aided by the wind, he is cooled by his sweat. Here Klaus perceives the world around him in elemental terms of water, fire, air, and earth: He feels the wet cloth and the wind on his body, the slaked fire within, and the ground beneath him. The Anatolian desert is no longer a vague backdrop he passes through, but a stopping point and a felt reality. The natural imagery of circulating air in the cave and the ebb and flow of Klaus’ breath induces a calm and effortless feel that contrasts the strained machinery of the car. Remarkably, Klaus notes that “his body was breathing” which intimates a rift between cognition of the body and of the mind. When asked by his saviour, “how do you feel?” his answer is uncertain; “[f]ine, I think” (98). Appropriately, a personification of an exterritorial experience, Klaus does not recognise his body as integral to the self. His reality is entirely virtual and, like his room of frosted glass, removed from any grounded physicality.

The cave symbolises what may be described as a corporeal phenomenology. It invokes a local, primeval mode of life at odds with Klaus technological gadgets. Indeed, the cave and Klaus’ hypermodern house comprise a suggestive juxtaposition between the primitive and the modern, nature and artifice, human and technology, the local and the global,

which accentuates their paradoxical simultaneity. In a similar vein, Dengel-Janic observes that “two ways of being in the world forcefully collide” in the story: “One is the Western technological and economic claim to supremacy and control over the world, and the other is the clandestine, illegal strangers’ world whose journeys cannot be mapped” (Dengel-Janic, 2013, p. 83).

Deniz’ journey to Frankfurt is defined by navigational complications. Whereas Klaus has an ultimate freedom of movement, her route is restricted. Her mother notes: “I doubt we shall ever see each other again. Borders do not open very frequently for people like us” (102). Her statement emphasises the dramatic nature of Deniz’ departure from her home which signifies a final exodus. Klaus debates with Deniz’ mother about Deniz coming to Germany: “Even if I were to buy her an air ticket she would not be able to come for she has no visa, no permission to enter or stay. Does she even have a passport?” (102). A savvy system of state-regulated migration limits her mobility. This system surveys and controls migration on a global scale. It facilitates the manoeuvrability of a wealthy elite, personified by Kaufman, while immobilising those people who, like Deniz, have not “a scrap of paper in the world where [their] name is written” (ibid.), those who exist outside the system. Deniz therefore journeys by alternate, irregular routes of migration:

*The details are unimportant and they have burdened me for too long. I have spent much time underground, much time soaked with foul-smelling water, much time not seeing the lands I am passing through. Let us just say that my journey could not be traced on your map!*³⁰ (105)

In order to get to Frankfurt, she ‘passes through’ the sewers; the pipelines transporting waste which connect her world with Klaus’. Her account conveys a journey of great hardship and provides a contrast to Klaus’ routine business trips. The darkness that surrounds her during her passage echoes with colonial accounts of the seaward transportation of people as cargo along the Middle Passage, an industry of slavery that came to feed imperial economies. Once arrived in Kaufman’s corporate realm, Deniz is subjected to a process of dehumanisation that similarly recalls the transatlantic slave trade. She is examined by a doctor who “will not say a word to her. He will shine lights in her eyes and her throat, will listen [...] to the sound of her

³⁰ Deniz has no voice and therefore cannot speak. She uses telepathy instead which is reflected by italics in the novel.

chest, will don latex gloves [...] and conduct an extensive gynaecological examination” (116). The impersonal examination iterates the inspection of slaves prior to the slave auctions to determine their financial value and their purpose of use. The procedure is recounted through the repetition of what the doctor “will” do to Deniz, hinting at her complete subjugation to his will. In the clinic there is a “painting of a shipwreck” that shows “dark heads bobbing in the ocean, hull and masts at unnatural angles”. The painting, too, evokes the transatlantic slave trade, the sinking ship and “dark heads” in the water a reminder of the human ‘cargo’ that was often lost at sea. As European imperialism was legitimated and perpetuated through dehumanising practices, so, too, is Klaus’ corporate empire. The links in “The Story of the Frankfurt Mapmaker” between residual and emergent forms of domination echo with Marcuse’s critique of globalisation as a continuation of imperialist practices, now undertaken by neo-liberal, corporate regimes.

Klaus’ vocation involves a side-business, or shadow economy. This business transforms ‘useless’ elements into ‘useful’ components of the machinery that ensures the exterritorial elite instant gratification. It is a ‘waste management’ industry that repurposes unwanted material. Discarded by Klaus, Deniz enters the production line of this industry when she is illegally employed as a hotel maid. In this new role her single purpose is to service the travellers and guests. As all the other maids in the hotel, Deniz is suggestively dressed in a brown uniform, and she takes her breaks behind the hotel “by the piles of garbage sacks, where the vents belch the hot air that no one wants inside” (119). She is thus, quite literally, depicted as a part of the mounting pile of waste produced and then discarded by wealthy elites. Meanwhile, the unsavoury “belching” of stale air from the hotel adds to the recurring motif in the story of corporate globalisation as a gluttonous superorganism devouring all that enters its alimentary canal.

Deniz’ transformation from subject to object reifies Bauman’s concept of ‘human waste’, or more precisely, ‘wasted humans’ (Bauman, 2013). Bauman contends that systemic management of globalisation generates ‘human waste’. According to Bauman, “refugees, the displaced, asylum seekers, migrants, [and] the *sans papiers*” can be identified as “the waste of globalization” (Bauman, 2013, p. 58). These groups of people are not considered to contribute to the quest of global capital to produce ever more capital through rationalisation and increasing systemic control. Their movements and allegiances are obscure and they therefore

constitute a challenge to successful supervision and management of global flows. They are resected and barred from accessing the privileged ‘global community’. However, this kind of globalisation contains an insoluble aporia. The forces that seek to manage global flows have seized worldwide sovereignty, claiming to govern a boundless territory. Consequently, there is no ‘outside’ of this System and so no separate dumping ground onto which the resected undesirables may be deposited. Successful resection from the global network is impossible. Therefore, undesired elements like Deniz must be ‘repurposed’ to benefit the operation of systemic and rationalising globalisation while at the same time being kept under control.

My reading of “The House of the Frankfurt Mapmaker” as a symbolic expression of the dual character of globalisation as rationalisation recalls Marcuse’s concept of globalism discussed in chapter one. The story shows neo-liberal forces of global capitalism as attempting to consume ‘the under-developed’ peoples and regions of the world and to immerse them within the dominant order of rule in manageable forms. Klaus’ map is the ultimate embodiment of Orientalist discourses restructured to accommodate a contemporary ‘global’ setting. It translates colonial dichotomies of Self/Other, civilised/uncivilised into an equally problematic binary of globalised/unglobalised, ‘developed/under-developed’. The urban ‘cores’, symbolised by Klaus’ technologically advanced house, lay claim to an alleged civilizational superiority. In these cores artificially enhanced speed and velocity are governing principles. Deniz’ cave represents a comparably localised, or grounded, ‘periphery’ which, by the measure of globalist discourses, is unglobalised and therefore uncivilised. Her realm is governed by compassion and natural beauty, a potent contrast to Klaus’ unfeeling rationalisation. In the story, the ‘globalised’/‘unglobalised’ dichotomy thus legitimates the primacy of rationalisation over humanitarian values as the structuring principle of globalisation.

However, we may think in a less deterministic way about the ‘waste industry’ that expands in the wake of globalisation as rationalisation. Deniz is a physical manifestation of that which cannot be fully monitored and controlled by the systemic forces of capital. Like Marcuse’s globalism, Klaus’ map is orchestrated so as to perpetuate hierarchical power structures. However, his network cannot be easily controlled. Once a connection is established between nodes, the direction of flows between them is unpredictable. By journeying along the pipelines displayed in Klaus’ map in a reversed direction, Deniz exposes the illusory character

of his irrevocable systemic control. Deckard describes Deniz as a personification of “the return of the repressed”, a figure that makes “visible the ‘unspeakable things’ in the shadow economies accompanying the rationalization of the neoliberal market” (Deckard, 2012, p. 7). Like everything else in Klaus’ virtual reality, Deniz materialises at his doorstep as if out of nowhere. Her presence challenges his delusion of a single global order effectively governed by corporate elites. Her arrival is an unwelcome articulation of that which has been suppressed in Klaus’ cartography. In spite of filters and barriers, Deniz surfaces from the depths. Her appearance in Frankfurt is testament to the fact that, underneath the map’s self-proclaimed accuracy, alternate forces operate outside the control of the system. A network of irregular migration has hijacked Klaus’ underground grid of pipelines. The ‘sanitary’ pathways displayed in Klaus’ map, which are meant to steer human ‘waste’ away from the world’s centres of privilege and power, are used subversively to redirect migrant flows into these metropolitan spaces. Klaus’ cartography thus serves as a double-edged sword. The ‘things’ that it deposits out of sight are not only conveniently out of mind but also, it seems, out of control.

Deniz’ lack of voice is important in this respect, if ambivalent. It may be read either as a signifier of her ultimate incapacitation in the face of corporate globalisation, or as a symbolic expression of her subversive presence, of that which has been silenced but not eliminated. Though physically prevented from talking, she speaks silently within people’s minds. Deniz shatters Klaus’ panorama by throwing herself through the glass of his tower. For the briefest of moments, her intrusion into his world is a powerful act of subversion that opens his vision to the world outside. Her attempt at escape is thwarted. Her lifeless body is put into one of the black garbage bags and so re-enters the cycle of the waste management industry. She has passed through the alimentary canal of corporate globalisation. She has undergone a transformation from individual to commodified illegal labour, and finally, depleted of usefulness, she has been discarded as waste. Before she dies, Deniz sees that the electronic map is “astonishingly full of *garbage*”; “bags of uniform black plastic” accumulate everywhere (123). In spite of her dismal ending, then, Deniz becomes part of a mounting excess which cannot be truly disposed of and which threatens to collapse Klaus’ inhuman, systemic globalisation.

The juxtaposition in the story of Klaus’ house and Deniz’ cave seems to subverts globalist dichotomies of globalised/unglobalised, civilised/uncivilised. The imagery through

which these distinct geographies are portrayed sets an uncanny global cartography of corporate savagery and greed against a locally contextualised experience of great beauty and modesty. Rather than suggesting a society of civilised practices, the technological setting of Klaus house and his ‘global’ travels invoke a mechanical and superficial existence. By removing ineffective elements, his systemic network has resected also its own humanity; has mutated into an inhuman organism in the service of global corporations. “The Story of the Frankfurt Mapmaker” thus critiques the privileging of rationalisation and effectivisation ideals in the name of global capital. It is a cautionary tale about the ways in which a one-sided conception of globalisation as rationalisation can be employed to legitimate and perpetuate neo-liberal forms of domination. Yet it also points to the possibility that this particular globalisation narrative is undergoing important restructurations. In the story, the effects of a much more far-reaching connectivity are, for better or for worse, making themselves increasingly visible, to the point of almost exposing and thus subverting the covertly dehumanising and exploitative practices of neo-liberal capitalism.

“The Store on Madison Avenue. The Fifth Story.”

A woman is seduced by Robert De Niro and conceives a child. She places the baby boy in a box at a truck stop wherefrom he is transported to JFK. He is found by a group of immigrant airport workers. They name him Pavel and bring him up in the freight terminal where they live. Fully grown, Pavel leaves the airport to be a taxi driver in New York City. Here he meets Isabella and they fall in love. Isabella buys a packet of Nabisco’s Oreos that advertises a magical prize inside the box: If crumbled into a pint of milk and poured over her body, the cookies can transform Isabella into a clothes store on Madison Avenue. Mr Chu, who is a ganglord and the unchallenged king of retail property in New York, has heard of Pavel and Isabella’s magic power and wants it for himself. He sabotages Isabella’s transformation as she expends the last remaining magic Oreo in the packet. Mr Chu’s interruption of Isabella’s transformation leaves her half-store, half-human. Pavel seizes the mangled Isabella, seeking refuge in the woodlands beyond the metropolis. Mr Chu captures Pavel and threatens to kill him unless he discloses the source of their magic. However, pushed to the limits by Mr Chu, Pavel intuits the secret behind Nabisco’s “transubstantiation of matter” (155), and he turns himself into concrete so he cannot be harmed. He absorbs Mr Chu within his concrete corpus

and, descending deep under the United Nations Plaza, fixes Mr Chu forever underground. Pavel then shifts back to human form and effortlessly restores her to her original state.

“The Store on Madison Avenue” portrays commercialisation as a force that can bring about the transubstantiation of matter: It can ascribe substance and value to what is, in fact, a hollow consumer culture. This power translates in the language of romance as a magical ability to physically transform humans and give them inhuman form. In the story, this commercial power is both corrupting and redemptive. It is employed strategically by corporations to create a culture of distraction that converts potentially critical subjects into automated consumers. Yet, the informed consumer or entrepreneur understands that commercial value is malleable and relative, and this important insight enables him to influence and challenge the dominance of large corporations. Mr Chu and Pavel both make use of this commercial magic. Mr Chu taps into its corrupting potential while Pavel uses it for redemptive purposes. The two characters personify two different kinds of sovereignty: Mr Chu represents an outmoded, territorially oriented sovereignty that is geographically delimited and therefore finite. Meanwhile, Pavel represents a new globally oriented generation that strategically appropriates the technology of transubstantiation to contest Mr Chu’s territorial dominance.

My analysis of “The Store on Madison Avenue” focuses on the story’s staging of New York as a token metropolitan space governed by commercialisation and a consumerism. With particular focus on Isabella’s transformation from human to store, it explores consumer culture as a practice that profits from the perpetuation of social inequality. I consider Pavel as a new archetypal figure and hero in the global imaginary, a reification of Iyer’s ‘global soul’.

Like a contemporary Moses, Pavel is set afloat as a baby, packed “carefully in a box”, and placed at a “truck stop [...] with a pile of crates waiting to be loaded” (133). He is transported from “the rural parts of America” (ibid.) and arrives at one of the chief gateways of metropolitan life, the airport. Notably, this site is portrayed in the story as a despondent space:

there gathered in that place a group of Polish airport workers who secretly lived in the concrete recesses of JFK. They handled wooden crates and steel containers during the day, and knew every stone and every corner of the airport. At night, when their work was done, they lit fires, drank vodka, and spoke of Warsaw,

Krakow, and Queens, before sleeping for a few hours on the slabs where they sat, with inebriation their only pillow. (134)

This is the backstage wherefrom immigrant workers ensure the smooth running of the airport. They enable the continuous flow of commodities into and out of the metropolis from distant locations. They are absorbed by the machinery of global transfer as a serving caste. Meanwhile, living and working in the freight terminal, they are effectively segregated from the travellers. Pavel finds himself in a hub of global transit, yet he learns “to read English from *Elle*, *Playboy*, and old copies of the *Daily News*” (135). His English is acquired through solitary endeavour, rather than by social interaction with the many travellers who pass through the airport. Indeed, all communication between the workers and the outside world is distanced and impersonal, happening in “the language of two red bars by which men spoke to aeroplanes” (134). The world of instant gratification inhabited by exterritorial elites is fed by networks of disenfranchisement. In “The Store on Madison Avenue”, this unwelcome truth is physically relegated to the “recesses” (134) of the airport where Pavel and the Polish workers live; the freight terminal is the metaphorically repressed subconscious of the global order. For the immigrant workers, the airport represents segregation rather than connection. Their conversations invoke an inaccessible outside. The mention of Warsaw and Krakow seems, at first glance, to hint at a nostalgic evocation of their distant home. However, the conjoint mentioning of Queens, which lies just beyond the confines of the JFK, serves to stress that, whether near or far in geographical terms, life outside the airport is, ultimately, out of their reach.

The freight terminal is filled with items that attest to the existence of the world that the airport workers serve and sustain, but from which they are cut off:

[Pavel] built a house out of packing crates and decorated it with rope and fluorescent orange canvas from a windsock, as well as trinkets stolen from suitcases in transit: CDs, spectacle lenses, pages torn from books, a bottle of Issey Miyake aftershave, a set of screwdrivers, a Mexican poncho, boxes of Marlboro cigarettes, family photographs, an Australian boomerang, and hundreds of tampons that he hung from the ceiling. (Ibid.)

This jumble of items are “in transit”, out of context, and therein severed from their original meaning. In the freight terminal, these trinkets from unknown locations around the world

attain an almost surreal quality as they morph into building materials. They are listed in a hodgepodge manner that suggests their almost democratic triviality. Within this space of de-territorial transit they exist outside their contextual hierarchies determined by commercial consumer culture. Here, a photograph of people unknown and a bottle of Issey Miyake aftershave are listed as equally (in)significant. Pavel's house is an amalgam of private belongings and commercial commodities, epitomising the airport as a mash-up of the personal and the impersonal; it is a space that interweaves individual journeys and grand commercial schemes. It also accentuates the airport as a liminal space of dislocation and, potentially, hints at the agglomerate character of Pavel himself.

He is the abandoned child of Robert DeNiro and a Chinese woman. The scene recounting his conception invokes the mythical trope of gods descending to Earth to conceive a child with a mortal (133)³¹. It performs a conflation of Hollywood stardom with the Divine and hints at the glorification in popular culture of commercial film industries and celebrity worship. Moreover, it invites a reading of Pavel as a mythical figure, a demigod, and potential hero. His origins straddle the entire spectre of commercial hierarchies: He is a son of glorified celebrity culture and an orphan, growing up in the dark recesses of hypermodernity. Indeed, Pavel may be considered an archetypal personification of Iyer's 'global soul', a "new kind of being [...] who ha[s] grown up in many cultures all at once – and so live[s] in the cracks between them" (Iyer, 2000, p. 18). Pavel is brought up in a zone of transfer and claims no nationality, nor a place of belonging. He is Italian and American, through his father's heritage, and Chinese by his mother's; he is raised by Poles and speaks Polish as well as English. Like Iyer's global soul, Pavel may be "characterised by the fact of falling between all categories" (Iyer, 2000, p. 23).

JFK is linked to New York by "the taxis that arrived at the airport and left again in long columns like so many yellow ants. [Pavel] thought that the people who drove them must truly know the world" (135). The taxis are connectors peddling between the airport and the metropolis. Contrasted with the dislocation of the aerial world, they present a concrete link to place, and thereby to context. Fittingly, therefore, as Pavel drives his taxi around New York

³¹ Yet, the scene is also invocative of the filmic genre of 'laundromat porn' wherein strangers meet and have impersonal and coincidental sex. This reference serves to destabilise a romantic reading of Pavel as the product of passionate love, or even infatuation.

his movements are specifically localised and easily traceable on a map of the city, e.g. the fictitious “Singh Brothers Taxi Company on 22nd Avenue in Queens” (ibid.), the Aquarium in Brooklyn (136), and the Trump World Tower (153).

Whereas the airport comprises a compartmentalised system, the city of New York initially seems to promise unlimited freedom of movement:

Pavel’s relationship with the streets was intuitive, like the relationship of data to wires; and soon he could navigate the city more effortlessly than any of the other drivers. At night he would drive down Broadway from 178th Street to Battery Park on the wave of green lights without ever touching the brake [...] When he was not working, he visited far-off parts of the city to find out what happened there. (136)

This imagery sees the city as an ocean. By regulating traffic, the green and red lights generate an ebb and flow of movement in the street that resembles the rise and fall of waves. As if the captain of a ship, Pavel steers his taxi through a metaphorical sea of traffic. Due to his “intuitive” relationship with the streets he expertly avoids obstructive red lights and upholds an uninterrupted movement all the way from Upper to Lower Manhattan. Clearly, the global soul has an instinctual ability to negotiate inhibiting borders and checkpoints, as well as an intrinsically expansive perspective. The maritime symbolism of waterways and navigation liquefies the otherwise rectilinear, grid-like layout that is characteristic of the New York City plan. It envisions the metropolis as a fluid space, though also potentially obstructive for those who, unlike Pavel, do not have an intuitive relationship with its streets.

The Singh Brothers’ Taxi Company initially seems to offer boundless freedom of movement as it enables Pavel to travel easily between different parts of the city. It represents a connective, convivial business where the “hearty employees” are “friends” rather than colleagues (137). During Pavel’s interview for the job as taxi driver, Mr Singh seeks to determine his moral character by asking him; “What is a good human being?” (135). Pavel reveals a “conscientious” (136) character when he answers that “a good human being is one who loves his family”, “pays taxes”, and “has respect for the law”, someone who is “responsible and never unfair to colleagues” (135-136). Pavel’s response forms an ethics of personal responsibility to uphold humanitarian virtues of compassion and honesty in social interactions. It conveys a morality performed through social networks at a local street level.

The Singh Brothers' Taxi Company have parties in the street where they squat "on a slip road behind the concrete walls of the New Jersey Turnpike where there was a deserted patch of ground not visible from anywhere" (136). Significantly, their party is held on a "slip road", an in-between, even "deserted", site. In its invisibility and isolation, this place bears a disconcerting resemblance to the freight terminal in JFK. The taxi drivers are near the New Jersey Turnpike, on the outskirts of the city. Like the airport workers, then, they facilitate movement and transit while they are themselves consigned to the periphery of metropolitan life.

Upon returning to the city after the party, Pavel and Isabella stop at the Toll Plaza:

As they looped down towards Lincoln Tunnel, with Manhattan blinking broadside on ahead of them, the road finally slowed and widened into the Toll Plaza, like a river reaching its delta. As Pavel drew up to the tollbooth [...] 'Three dollars and fifty cents.' [...] Three dollar bills and two quarters were handed over. (139)

The imagery that envisions the streets as a vast system of connective waterways is extended with this depiction of a narrow strait that widens into a "delta", the Toll Plaza, patrolled by the city's authorities who have put a tax upon entrances into its domain. Like the airport, the metropolis is concurrently a place of mobility and stasis, a gated site within which freedom of movement has a prize and is determined by financial manoeuvrability.

In the Singh Brothers' office there is a poster of Ganesh who is known in Hindu religion to remove obstacles and vouchsafe wisdom. At first glance, when considered in conjunction with the maritime imagery of flows into and out of the city, this poster encourages a reading of the taxi driver as a knowledgeable archetype of the global metropolis; someone who, as Pavel muses, "truly knows the world" and therefore enjoys uninhibited movement. However, the poster is "faded" (135), its potency symbolically diminished. Indeed, the physical appearance of the Singh Brothers' business quarters emphasises a suspension of the otherwise powerful and convivial potential of the taxi drivers' street-view perspective:

[The] Singh Brothers' hand-painted sign stood atop a hut in the middle of a concrete courtyard littered with the hulks of retired taxis. On the street in front was parked a proud line of working models in gleaming yellow, all topped with a cardboard crown proclaiming the virtues of AT&T Wireless. (Ibid.)

The office building is a humble, even primitive, “hut” and the compound is dishevelled, the term “littered” evoking the feel of an unkempt junkyard. Together these features establish the Singh Brothers’ Taxi Company as a minor, careworn enterprise. Compared to the line of new radiant models in front, the diminutive courtyard is but a despondent background. The working taxis seem to belong to another, more glamorous domain. Their glitzy “card board crowns” offer a compelling contrast to the comparably negligible “hand-painted sign” and signify the usurpation of the business management by commercial forces. The local entrepreneurship of the Singh Brothers has been stunted by a powerful authority; the dazzling display of flashing newness a hallmark of the ultimate economic dominance of commercial forces. Large corporations have appropriated the streetwise potential of the taxis and converted them into marketing vehicles³². Rather than facilitating the movement of people between different parts of the metropolis, the drivers’ mobility and knowledge of the city are employed with the agenda of promoting commercial brands across town. The cardboard crowns are exchangeable and signify the transitory nature of this kind of sovereignty. What is in vogue one week may be outmoded the next. Brands are visible everywhere in the city. Accordingly, descriptions of Isabella are specked with trademarks. Her “smile smelt of Eau d’Issey” (136); her apartment is decorated with “subdued GAP furnishings”, a “blazing Versace wall hanging” (137), and “sheets by Calvin Klein” (140). No explanation is offered as to the appearance, quality, or sensation of these items. Clearly, branding has acquired such special significance and meaning in and of itself that it renders any further elaboration superfluous.

In a manoeuvre that mirrors the conflation of divinity with Hollywood stardom, the story depicts spirituality as substituted by consumer culture. Transformed into a “deluxe clothes boutique” (143), the store ‘Isabella’ emerges as a place dedicated to secular worship:

creations were suspended in electronic halos like relics [...] Fibrous shirts were laid out on glowing tables of frosted glass as if they were priceless, crumbling

³² The official website of YellowCabNYC attracts commercial investments by advertising the company as an effective vehicle for marketing: “**Our Taxi Tops are visible 24 hours a day, every day, in the most high profile areas of the city. Taxi top advertising can help you dominate the New York City market with impact and frequency**”. The forceful rhetoric of “dominance” mirrors the imagery of “The Store on Madison Avenue” wherein commercialisation is depicted as an oppressive sovereignty that operates through a method of conditioning. (YellowCabNYC)

parchments, and gossamer dresses hung from the ceiling on steel cables that moved them up and down in a stately overhead dance [...] all around there were beautiful attendants who all seemed, with their elongated limbs and their weightless gait, to belong to some new subphylum of humanity. (Ibid.)

The exclusive designs in 'Isabella' are likened to relics and the shirts resemble ancient historical artefacts. Like guardian angels who help their human charges through life, the graceful and ephemeral shop attendants assist wealthy customers with their shopping. The store has an otherworldly quality. In metaphorical terms it is a sacred "monument" (144) dedicated to the veneration of design. However, its dancing gossamer dresses eerily imitate life and resemble headless, ghostly spirits. The scene exudes the uncanny ambience of a haunted house. Although displayed as if they possess an inordinate significance, the designer items for sale in the store are insubstantial and flimsy. In a similar fashion, the store appears to be a "huge", "Doric" (142), and "colossal" (145), but is, in fact, a transitory realm, the "impermanence" (ibid.) of which is predetermined by the number of Oreo cookies in the box. This place of commercial worship is expertly geared towards sales and profit. It makes every item seem to be of a "priceless" quality. The store is a house of illusions where marketing displays elevate items of merchandise to relics of worship. By changing the immaterial and transitory into items of great substance, the forces of commercialisation effect a metaphorical "transubstantiation of matter" (155). The theological term 'transubstantiation' recalls the sacred ritual of Communion by which, through divine benediction, the substance of bread and wine becomes the body and blood of Christ. In the nowhere of the freight terminal, global brands are mere "trinkets" used to "decorate" Pavel's house. The metropolis of New York, however, is, as we have seen, governed by a commercial sovereignty, and this sovereignty transforms such products into objects worthy of solemn devotion.

Commercial forces transform Isabella from human to inhuman: "[Pavel] saw her face start to flatten and become slowly grey [...] her features became concrete; streaks of chrome and glass flashed through her, and as her innards became visible, he saw them harden into spiral staircases" (142). Isabella's transformation is a disfiguring process by which the softness of her "human curves" is "sculpted into sharp corners" (143). The gleaming, steely materials from which the store is made add to its colossal size and eerie ambience a cold and unbending

character. Metaphorically, consumer culture deforms human and personal values as it transfers meaning instead onto superficial and commercial ideals.

The store is “settled within the landscape of the city” (ibid.). As a continuation of the existing architecture, its assimilation within the urban landscape envisions the store as a reflection of New York itself. The structure is located on Madison Avenue, its location a metonym for the world of advertising, which suggests that the city, like the store, is defined by a hollow consumer culture.

When Pavel and Isabella strike it rich, they are themselves absorbed and transformed by the spectacle of consumer culture that informs life in the metropolis:

Pavel drove taxis less and less. He and Isabella suddenly had as much money as they could ever want. He developed a taste for Giorgio Armani suits, which he hung in rows in Isabella’s apartment, sorted by colour. On weekend afternoons they dropped in to the Four Seasons and ordered lobster and champagne ‘to go’. They bought a Mercedes convertible and spent weekend gambling in Vegas. They always won [...] Gradually, the Oreo cookies disappeared. (145)

In the airport, Pavel was oblivious as to the ‘special’ significance of the trademarked building materials from which he made his house. Here, however, his “taste” is highly selective, restricted to the prestigious Armani brand. Pavel and Isabella are now fervent consumers themselves. They travel within and without the city ‘in style’. There is a strong sense of opulence and excess to their seemingly infinite spending power. Nonetheless, the vanishing Oreos ominously remind the reader of the limitations of their wealth. Nabisco’s recipe for commercial success is, potentially, infinite. Yet, instructions on the packet inform the winner of the magical cookies that “there are 20 OREO cookies in this packet. Each of them is good for one transformation. When you have finished this packet, you will never be able to use this magic again” (142). Nabisco have “filed for several hundred patents to protect all the processes they had invented [...] from pharmacological mechanisms [...] to the design of the store; from all the various transformations of muscle, bone, hair, into concrete, steel, and glass (and vice versa)” (154-155). The magical prize is an exceptional “SPECIAL ANNIVERSARY OFFER!” (140) used to advertise the Oreo product and increase sales. The large corporation thus accumulates a disproportionate amount of capital while withholding their lucrative technology from public use. As the toll keeper at the plaza controls movement

into and out of the metropolis, so do the corporate forces of retail manage the flow of capital. Advertisements in the city promise endless social mobility, proclaiming “*Transform your dreams into gold!* and *It’s time to make a change!*” (136). Evidently, this promised freedom and opportunity is, in practice, monitored and restricted by corporate forces.

The “unchallenged king of retail property in New York” (146), Mr Chu, surveys the metropolis:

These dancers are the thirteen daughters of the great ganglord Chu Yu Tang. Mr Chu owns casinos and construction companies all across the city, as well as, you should know, America’s largest fireworks factory. His daughters dance for New York’s gatherings, high and low. It is said that nothing can escape these ladies and that the omniscience of the father springs from the dancing engagements of the daughters. (138)

From his spying daughters, Mr Chu knows all that goes on in the city and uses this information to retain his power. He seizes the physical territory of New York and converts the city into a space dedicated to further the value of the land and so to add to his own profits. Mr Chu transforms the physical expanse of the city into a space defined by capital. He explains to Pavel: “This is the wonderful predictability of my business. Land –on human timescales, at least, and with only a few exceptions– never goes anywhere. Once you own the land you may decide to destroy what has been put there and create something new in order to increase its value” (153). Mr Chu’s property is physically “*immobile*” (ibid.) wherefore he considers it a ‘solid’ investment. Mr Chu supervises his business from his “well-appointed reception room on the eightieth floor of the Trump World Tower” (ibid.). His omniscience is mirrored by the space he inhabits. From this elevated position of power, he has a panoramic view of his landholdings in New York City that recalls de Certeau’s view of Manhattan from the World Trade Center. For, like de Certeau, Mr Chu sees the city as a “wave immobilised”; an unflinching territorial order. His perspective directly contrasts Pavel’s street-view, which conceives of the city as a liquid space of continuous movement. The Fifth Story thus juxtaposes two ontologies personified by Mr Chu and Pavel, respectively: The first is territorial and bounded, the other liquid and expansive.

Mr Chu owns casinos and fireworks factories. He invests in businesses of diversion. He is in the business of providing distractions to New York gatherings. By putting on elaborate displays, he dazes the people of the city, thus enabling him to retain his position as the unchallenged sovereign of New York business-life. In a similarly strategic manoeuvre, his daughters interrupt the taxi drivers' party behind the New Jersey Turnpike. They arrive at the very moment when "Mr Singh told dramatic tales of how the city used to be: roads that had disappeared entirely, strident towers that had sprouted miraculously from the compost of dilapidated houses" (137). Mr Singh's tales recall a forceful arrogation of the city's connective streets by buildings that 'tower' obtrusively above street level. Conceivably, these are stories of Mr Chu's annexation of New York which are intercepted by Mr Chu's daughters. To begin with, the party was a "gathering" of drivers who drank "whiskey", "joked", and told stories. When Mr Chu's daughters arrive, however, they provide "fine entertainment" (ibid.) in the form of dancing. The term 'entertainment' contrasts the convivial exchange of the drivers and signifies instead a passive reception, and the silenced audience merely "watch appreciatively" (138) while the daughters dance.

Gradually, the pace of the dancing, and of the party, escalates; the "tabla and voice became more passionate"; and "waves of responsiveness passed through the circle of dancers. Card games broke out among the guests, a fire was lit" (ibid.). It seems as if the drumming and the dancing entice the guests to indulge in gambling and drinking. Dancing seductively in black cocktail dresses by the firelight, Mr Chu's daughters resemble demonic temptresses:

The tabla player set loose his hands, which stampeded all over the drums, flickering like advertising. The singer left behind the words of his song and gave himself up to ecstatic cries and bellows [...] when the music had completed its full spectrum of moods and permutations, there was a thunderous finale from the drums, thirteen cocktail dresses were flung into the air, and thirteen laughing Chinese ladies in black Chanel bikinis divided themselves into four limousines. (Ibid.)

The daughters have induced a state of ecstasy. As the music climaxes, the singer abandons words, and thereby any coherent thought, for exulted bawls. The party is ablaze with fire and feral drumming; the fitful music transports its audience through confounding variations. Mr Chu's daughters induce a trance that intercepts reflection and diverts subversive action. Their ominous laughter emphasises that they have hijacked the party. They have pacified the

gathering and sidetracked the guests' attention from Mr Singh's dissident tales. Importantly, their spectacle is likened to the flickering lights of advertisements. They draw upon the magical commercial power to seduce and distract.

Whereas Mr Chu's wealth and power are linked to his ownership of the physical territory of New York and thus, necessarily, finite, the store on Madison Avenue is "flexible":

[Isabella's] innards [...] magically spawned space all around them, space that metastasized beyond her apartment and ate up the street all around, that dissolved the city into a rushing ravine and transported the two [Pavel and Isabella] right through its solidity [...] she aligned herself with the rectilinearity of the Manhattan streets [...] Then suddenly it became quiet and she was settled in the landscape of the city as if she had always been there. (142-143)

'Isabella's' takeover of New York retail is described here as a cancer that devours and supplants existing structures. By spawning space, 'Isabella' liquefies the layout of the city and causes a collapse of Mr Chu's otherwise 'solid' order: A torrent rushes forth with a force that physically corrodes Mr Chu's territory and therein undermines his power. That Pavel and Isabella are "transported", shows that the process is out of their control. They are 'swept off their feet', metaphorically seduced, by the forces of commercial retail and are simply along for the ride. Indeed, the torrent that carries them off is immensely powerful, likened to a force of nature. The cancerous and corroding qualities of the store indicate its destructive influence. However, because the flexible store deposes Mr Chu's control of New York retail, it also contains a redemptive potential. Isabella is presented through a pirate imagery. For example, she wears "a bandana tied around her head"; she "produce[s], with a flourish, a box of Oreo cookies" (140); and the revenues from the store are suggestively described as "takings" (146). This imagery identifies her as a seditious character. Like a fearsome pirate she draws the cookies as if they are a saber. The box of Oreos, an emblem of the liquefying power of commercialisation, is the weapon with which she plunders the New York elite and infringes upon Mr Chu's retail monopoly. Nonetheless, we remember that this act of subversion is, so far, under the complete control of the global corporation, Nabisco, which robs also Pavel and Isabella of agency.

The financial value of exclusive brands such as 'Isabella' is assigned by marketing strategies that transform ordinary objects into items of secular worship. Their worth is ephemeral and malleable, contingent upon the power of commercialisation to bring about the 'transubstantiation' of matter: The transfer of substance and meaning to arbitrarily adopted labels. Whereas Mr Chu's power is limited by territorial boundaries, brands are unbound by geographical confines and may be marketed on a global scale: The reach of commercial dominance is potentially unlimited. As Mr Chu explains to Pavel: "you do not have to wonder if someone will move your land from where it is. You do not need to be concerned that someone might take copies of your land and sell them at your expense. [...] A widespread confidence in this rule is the fundamental basis for my wealth" (153). His statement exposes a fallacy in the "indubitableness" of landownership (153). Since his wealth is based on people's confidence in the solidity and worth of territorial property, his lands are valuable only for so long as there is a consensus to this rule. The corporate transfer of meaning from his immobile land onto de-territorialised brands therefore poses a serious threat to Mr Chu's power. –And so, too, does the taxi drivers' knowledge of the real liquidity of the city's streets

The limitations of Mr Chu's power are revealed to Pavel when he and Isabella attempt to escape Mr Chu's vengeful persecution. Carrying the now half-store/half-human Isabella, Pavel

ran with her towards the trees at the edge of the Toll Plaza. He knew that if he was able to climb the concrete bank and disappear among the trees his pursuers could not follow; and with a Herculean effort he carried the leaden figure up the slope with him and slipped away into the shadowy and sweet-smelling woodland (151)

A physical border in the form of a "concrete bank" delimits the confines of the city, and thus of the zone that is governed by retail and commercial influences. Beyond Mr Chu's menacing realm, they find themselves in a natural refuge. The shade and smells of the woodland provide a soothing reprieve from the artificial and restlessly blinking (139) lights of Manhattan. Pavel stays with Isabella in the seclusion of the forest for weeks. He lives ascetically; he eats "roots and berries"; becomes "thin and yellow" (151); "gaunt and unkempt" (152). This moment of scarcity and grief at Isabella's deformation provides a contrast to their previous life of materialism and overindulgence. The woodland is a redemptive site, a place of healing where

the corrupting commercial influence of the metropolis can be purged. Thus, Pavel's "mind became dislodged from time and place and he began to have strange visions" (ibid.):

In the darkness at night a rectangle of light danced at a distance, maddening him with the writing images of people and places and things. He would shut his eyes and try to block it out but still the mirage played on his eyelids, and he could not sleep or dream. He saw in the rectangle big, glistening images of the passions of the world. (Ibid.)

The rectangle of light bears a resemblance to the billboards in the city, which, during Pavel's first time as a taxi driver, "glowed in the night" and advertised "[t]ransform your dreams into gold! and *Its time to make a change!*" (136). The glistening images that haunt him here are fluttering and erratic. Like advertisements, they are shifting invocations of "the passions of the world"; that is, the desires of an insatiable global market. The images "took over his mind" (ibid.): Like the distracting dancing of Mr Chu's daughters, they make rest impossible and thwart any attempt to think clearly. They signify the commercial culture of distraction, a blinding illusion of transformation through consumption. Gradually, as if in a zooming motion, the images come closer until:

[Pavel] opened his eyes and the pictures were right in front of his face; the light seared his eyelashes and the tip of his nose and he was staring at the texture of the thing: and he realized that this whole scintillating world was only a rapid succession of frozen moments, dead images that had been accelerated just beyond the speed of perception – and thus come to life. (Ibid.)

Pavel "look[s] deep into the images" (ibid.), seeing the commercial illusions up close. Their very texture is visible to him, as is their composition and substance. He then understands that what is marketed as animated and transformative is but a continuation of the ultimate authority of capital. The magic of transubstantiation has been applied by large corporations, epitomised by Nabisco, merely to re-distribute (financial) power from one restrictive sovereignty to another. In fact, the restlessly blinking lights and advertisements that dominate the city space operate in a manner similar to Mr Chu's dancing daughters. The 'City of Lights' diverts, or blinds, New York gatherings while profits from their consumption of commercial products perpetuate a corporate rule.

Following this new insight, Pavel's "perceptions sped up, the images that had so long tormented him seemed to follow each other more and more slowly, they lost their sheen and

became a funeral procession of blurred and insubstantial snatches of time. And finally, they stopped” (ibid.). In the woodland, he has retreated from the incapacitating influence of commercial rule into a quiet place that fosters introspection. He sees that the images are “dead” and “insubstantial”, and he understands that the significance ascribed to inanimate purchasable objects is an illusion. The woodland has initiated him into a consciousness that enables him to “understand in a moment the secrets and illusions of the physical world” (155). Whereas previously Pavel was entranced by the spectacle of consumer culture, his new insight suddenly stirs his sleeping senses: “The sky became white with the light from distant stars; his ears filled with car alarms in far-off Manhattan, and the murmur of conversations in overhead aeroplanes. The perfume of women in SoHo bars rushed up his nostrils like a torrent” (ibid.). While the commercial close-ups were fitful and obscured all other views, the starlight shines cleanly white and natural, illuminating rather than blinding.

Pavel’s perspective expands and he sees the world synoptically: He sees, listens, and smells teeming life and movement all around him. His outlook is at once local and universal in scope, as his awareness simultaneously encompasses life in nearby Manhattan and a global network symbolised by aeroplanes above. He has gained an omniscience more powerful than that of Mr Chu. Hence, “Pavel felt that something had changed at that moment – He did not know what it was. But when Mr Chu’s men came for him, he was ready” (ibid.). Pavel transcends Mr Chu’s constricting territorial power as well as Nabisco’s corporate rule. Therefore, when Mr Chu’s daughters endeavour to kill Pavel, he “manage[s] to master the transubstantiation of matter and turn it –in blatant patent infringement– against his enemies” (153):

his substance –yes!– had become concrete and all their slicings were in vein [...] It seemed effortless to will his flesh into stone [...] and his mind was in no way affected as he lost his ability to move or talk or even, finally, to see. While Mr Chu kicked him frenziedly and the daughters tried to smash his stone limbs he felt calm and strong, and soon his assailants found that their fists and feet were sticking, becoming grafted; for Pavel was absorbing them into his stoniness, drawing them in bit by bit as a snake does a pig. (155)

Isabella’s change into a store was controlled by Nabisco. It swept her and Pavel off their feet, grafting them within the ephemeral world of consumer culture. By contrast, Pavel is in full control of this transformation and his mind remains unaffected by the seductive influence that

transubstantiation carries. Indeed, he has seen through it and masters its illusory ability to transfer significance from one sphere to another. Mr Chu considers Pavel an inconsequential “nobody” (154). Here, however, Pavel here transforms into a man of immortal substance. Pavel’s understanding of commercial magic renders him an all-powerful adversary as he effectively immobilises Mr Chu and his daughters in “crazy poses” (155), transforming them into “their own dungeon, far below ground just outside the United Nations Plaza” (156). Thus, Mr Chu is banished from the city and fixed in a position more peripheral than that of the Polish airport workers in the freight terminal in JFK. He is figuratively removed from his elevated position of power on the eightieth floor of the Trump World Tower. Mr Chu, a personification of demonic powers, is fittingly banished to a hellish realm deep under ground from where he can no longer survey or influence New York gatherings. The territorially delimited order which he personifies is put out of action. This is the meaningful location at which the narrative ends. Conceivably, now that Mr Chu’s bounded supremacy has been deposed, the United Nations Plaza, representative of an ideal of global equality and peaceful co-existence, is subtly envisioned as a place wherefrom a redemptive power may eventually rise.

After Pavel discovers the secret of transubstantiation and the deceptive spectacle of commercial consumer culture, he and Isabella “still enjoy the occasional Oreo cookie” (ibid.). This is a conspicuously casual invocation of the Oreo brand which is in direct opposition to Isabella’s frantic exhilaration at her first purchase of the magic cookies: ““SPECIAL ANNIVERSARY OFFER! Could YOU be the winner of OREO’s most magical prize ever? [...] Isabella unwrapped the box slowly and intently, with a hint of mock wonder playing across her eyebrows” (140). Caught up in the illusion of commercial transubstantiation, this first consumption of the cookies is an elaborate performance, written in dramatic capitals. At the end of the narrative, however, the spell has been broken. The Oreos are now but ordinary cookies which may be safely enjoyed on occasion as their magical and potentially possessing attributes have been dispelled.

In “The Store on Madison Avenue”, large corporations and designer brands have infiltrated New York city life and control every echelon of the metropolitan order. Their dominance is exerted and perpetuated through copyrights and patents that limit the manoeuvrability of

those who are under their “spellbinding” (141) power. By means of commercialisation, Nabisco has transferred Mr Chu’s outmoded, territorialised supremacy onto liquid capital. The rise of a new order is depicted wherein *access* to a fluid and global web of commerce has superseded the primacy of *location*. The city of New York emerges as an ambiguous site. Its streets and taxi drivers epitomise a horizontal network that connects different districts and enables speedy and convenient movement. From their street-view perspective they intuitively grasp the liquid quality of the metropolis. By contrast, the vertical imprint of corporate towers and colossal stores swallows up the roads. These buildings symbolise a systemic and hierarchical order where authority is defined by financial spending power. Thus, within the metropolis, as in the airport of the frame narrative, a convivial ‘horizontal’ ethics competes with the dangerous and dehumanising forces of capital. Both of these networks make use of the magical properties of commercialisation which, in spite of its destructive and blinding potential, also contains an emancipating vision. The forces of commercialisation render any substance malleable. Therefore, if this technology is mastered, it generates an acute awareness of the flimsy foundations of corporate rule and allows for an alternate transubstantiation of matter onto yet another authority. Indeed, the transformative potential of commercialisation is appropriated by Pavel to safeguard personal autonomy and avoid subordination. Pavel is born to the nowhere of the freight terminal, travels from rural America to the airport, thence onward to New York. He is a new global archetype defined by a state of continuous transit. As a global soul, he falls between categories and therefore cannot be fully restrained; neither by Mr Chu’s territorial confines nor by Nabisco’s patents. He has a natural skill for navigating the global metropolis and sees through the illusion of commercial consumer culture. Pavel personifies a new generation who is native to the ambiguities of globalisation and who instinctively appropriates its liquefying potential.

In “The Tailor”, the financialisation of global commodity markets gave rise to neo-liberal, or ‘globalist’, forms of domination and control. In “The Store of Madison Avenue”, however, this financialisation of markets is emancipating, a catalyst of individual agency. The story thus seems to speak to the fact that “[m]ost of the accounts of globalisation as a process speculate that it has been led by economic trends” (Connell, 2014, p. 161). It positions commercial corporations as important vehicles for globalisation. They appear as instigators of the “transfer of sovereignty from individual nations to [...] supranational organisation[s]” (Connell, 2014, p. 162). –Or, in the symbolic language of the story, they represent a more

general allocation of power from territorial onto de-territorialised forms of sovereignty in the name of global trade and the liquidity of capital. It is by embracing and utilising this liquidity for their own purposes that Pavel and Isabella survive the destructive consequences of corporate monopoly. Once employed to transfer ‘matter’ from bounded territoriality and onto liquid capital, the technology of transubstantiation can be continually applied to bring about other transubstantiations; potentially, to transfer meaning and substance from a global culture of hollow materialism onto more convivial and ethical forms of connectivity. Thus, like Marcuse, “The Store on Madison Avenue” considers globalisation as the “internationalisation of capital” (see chapter one). Marcuse sees this development as a continuation of Western imperialism, a process of order building that produces and maintains hierarchical structures of dominance. In Dasgupta’s story, processes of de-territorialisation and de-contextualisation make impossible any endeavour to delineate power centres and peripheries in such territorial terms. Indeed, in the story it is a Chinese ganglord who owns and controls New York City, arguably an ironic statement as to the extensive influence of Eastern markets and policies upon the West. As in “The Tailor”, here de-territorialised narratives of liquid capital supersede localised narratives of nationalism or culture, but in “The Store on Madison Avenue” this development destabilises, rather than perpetuates, hierarchical structures of dominance.

“The Changeling. The Tenth Story.”

The changeling Bernard lives in Paris. Changelings are eternal beings, unless struck down by illness or old age while in their human form. They are subject to human envy and discrimination because of their immortality. Like most other changelings, Bernard therefore hides his true identity. When his secret is discovered, Bernard leaves his old life and takes to the streets where he meets Fareed. Fareed suffers from a deadly disease that causes plants to protrude from within him. He explains to Bernard that he is on a quest for a word of the future and Bernard decides to help. They check into a hotel where the ailing Fareed rests while Bernard searches Paris for his word. On this same day, there is an explosion at the Bastille. The explosion unearths old sediments wherein a smallpox virus lays dormant that causes an epidemic. The French government orders a quarantine of Paris and, to limit contagion, prohibits all movement within the city. Fareed sits in the garden of the hotel and sings of the mysteries of life and death and, ignoring government restrictions, people gather around from

all over Paris to listen. To lend Fareed warmth during the night, Bernard sleeps next to him and awakens entangled in the plants that erupt from within Fareed's body. Bernard and Fareed die together entwined by the growths. Fareed's songs spread throughout the world. The epidemic is contained and the government receives a vaccine from the United States that cures all afflicted.

"The Changeling" is structured around the juxtaposition of a national and a global perspective, exemplified by Bernard's view of Paris from two different locations in Paris: Montparnasse Cemetery and Fareed's garden, respectively. While the containable space of the cemetery embodies an outmoded, insular mythology of the nation, the garden symbolises a contrasting outlook of organic, expansive networks. Both of these perspectives on Paris exist concurrently within the space of the city. Yet, one is receding, the other emergent.

The Tenth Story in *Tokyo Cancelled* employs a cyclical imagery of death and rebirth to metaphorically convey the transformation of Paris from a national capital to a global metropolis. A bodily imagery envisions Paris as a superorganism, an entity, the life of which is sustained by the movement of, and exchange between, its people. The story begins with the explosion at the Bastille when the city is quarantined and consequently 'dies', and ends with the repopulation of its streets when the city is brought back to life and 'reborn'. Paris is transformed by the epidemic. When it comes to life once more, its physical space has been altered and its people have been initiated into a new reality and a new orientation.

With focus on depictions of Paris before and after the explosion at the Bastille, my analysis proposes that in "The Changeling" a global order encroaches upon and transforms residual mythologies of the nation as a bordered and uniform space. The nation is reborn as an integral part of a diverse and globally extending network.

In "The Changeling", the French nation obsessively delimits and polices both its physical and conceptual borders. It is, for example, a principal concern in France to identify and to expel changelings from the national community. "Politicians, citizens, and the media all agreed that neither liberty, equality, nor fraternity could be extended to creatures that had no long-term loyalty to the nation or even to the species (258). The universal and absolute concepts invoked in the French national motto assume a hollow ring since they are finite in practice, extended only to the insiders of gated national communities.

Existing originally in a “disembodied state” (ibid.), changelings can shift into human form. Yet, while “in all outward respects” they are “indistinguishable from a human being” (257), their origins are ‘alien’. For, though changelings look uncannily familiar, they are not permanently bound to their human bodies and thereby seem to be primarily of a spritely essence. Bernard contemplates: “When it comes down to it, I am not human: I cannot see this game through to its end” (260). In theory, then, his immortality allows him to see the end of the world and beyond. Bernard’s experience is panoramic. It potentially spans infinite horizons of both time and space. This outlook disqualifies Bernard from being eternally committed to the nation which, in a historical perspective, is a transient rather than a timeless entity. It unveils the myth of an ahistorical and transcendent national spirit as illusory and makes Bernard’s very presence a threat to the founding principles upon which the nation is built. Bernard thus seems to personify Madan Sarup’s idea of the stranger as an “eternal wanderer”; someone who is “homeless always and everywhere” (Sarup, 1996, p. 11). He can be classified as “neither friend nor enemy; we do not know and we have no way of knowing which is the case” (ibid.). Like Sarup’s stranger, Bernard is “physically close while remaining culturally remote” (ibid.).

Changeling alternations between disembodiment and physicality are described by humans as “mysterious arrivals and departures” (258), a transit terminology that links changelings to a migrant experience. Through the symbolic language of romance, then, “The Changeling” endows the figure of the migrant with an expansive and enlightened perspective on the world. This perspective manifests metaphorically as the ‘alien’ outlook of changelings.

The President of France addresses the People as his “brothers and sisters” (273). He speaks of the nation as an immediate family, a closely-knit community held together by ancestral bonds. However, his unifying rhetoric obscures no small degree of internal division within the nation. Before the disease breaks out in Paris, belonging or unbelonging to the nation hinges on the dichotomy of human/nonhuman, or people/changelings. After the outbreak of the disease, however, these categories are coupled by other dichotomies that multiply and gradually constrict the bounds of national membership. The epidemic, the President announces, “has stolen into our beautiful and cherished capital city” (273). The source of the disease is perceived to originate outside of France itself. When the nation enters a state of emergency and crisis, a hunt therefore begins that targets every kind of outsider:

The poor and homeless were commonly seen as likely sources of the virus, and bands of middle-class men roamed the streets seeking them out, full of retribution [...] fine distinctions were forgotten in the search for outsiders [...] Violence killed many more in these early stages than did the disease itself, and the sight of dead bodies in the streets only served to escalate the terrors of contagion. (Ibid.)

The supposed unity of the nation disintegrates as ‘fine distinctions’ are discounted and any minority becomes a probable carrier of national disease. The hunt for sources of contagion reveals that “France itself”, as a national community, is considered to be limited to the disconcertingly narrow category of “middle-class men”. Thus, national belonging is defined not solely in terms of human/nonhuman, but in terms of financial and gender classifications as well.

The weakening of the nation is in the Presidential speech ascribed to the presence of subversive, or contagious, outsiders. “The Changeling” resonates with contemporary discourses of global migration which often present minorities as a threat to the welfare state and to national coherence. In Dasgupta’s story, these minorities are, quite literally, transformed into perceived sources of nationwide dis/ease.

The virus does not observe the restrictions of national borders. It is “an ancient adversary of Man” (272), a worldwide danger that exposes the inconsistencies of a national outlook in a global age. The French government adopts a vocabulary of global solidarity, proclaiming that “France ha[s] a duty to all the people of the world to prevent the spread of the disease” (271). This rhetoric of an “*international* community” (emphasis added, *ibid.*) attests to a general awareness of the nation’s embeddedness within worldwide networks. As the president notes: “we are having to bring the vaccine from the United States of America whose president has graciously pledged all the help we may require” (*ibid.*). It serves as a significant point that in order to contain the disease, the French government is dependent upon the aid of a ‘global community’, albeit in the shape of a neo-imperial power. Clearly, in all but name and rhetoric, the nation is not a self-contained, self-reliant, or homogeneous entity, but is firmly embedded within a wider, global context.

The Bastille epitomises the myth about the birth of France as a modern European nation at the storming of the Bastille in 1789. In “The Changeling”, an explosion demolishes this iconic structure and produces an open crater in its stead:

it was pouring with rain and here and there car alarms tweeted in confusion at the heavenly onslaught [...] crowds of people gathered by the cordon that had been put around the square [...] Bernard walked around to see the crater. It opened into the Métro. Water was pouring over the layers of Third-Republic brickwork. Steam rose ghoulishly from within. Bernard looked at the rows of bodies laid out in rows in the square and shivered. (261)

The explosion tears apart the physical foundations of the national capital. The site, which was once an icon of national greatness and unity, is now a hollowed-out space. Water floods the constructions of the Third-Republic, signifying a metaphorical cleansing, or indeed a final dissolution, of the nation as it was. Simon Gikandi writes about globalisation discourses that they tend to present the nation as “an absent structure” (Gikandi, 2001, p. 635). Such discourses, he writes, consider the nation as “an apparatus of enormous symbolic power”, but one that produces “a continual slippage of categories” in a global age (ibid.). Indeed, the symbolically hollowed-out Bastille in “The Changeling” speaks eloquently to this conception of the incapability of the bordered national optics to contain a global order. Protective barricades encircle The Place de la Bastille and keep it ‘in place’. They prevent the crowds from inspecting the inner deterioration of the site. Figuratively, the nation has exploded its limits, and left are but markers of a corroded territorial space. In spite of an inner emptiness, the illusion of national sovereignty is continually sustained through a bureaucratic safeguarding of its now obsolete borders. Fareed confides in Bernard that “[w]hen you are diagnosed with death [...] your head is filled with palliative words: how can you prolong things as much as possible, how can your body be made most comfortable while it dies” (266). The government’s barricades may be conceived in similar terms as a palliative attempt to preserve existing structures; to sustain, for as long as possible, the corroding foundations of the nation.

The pouring rain, a “heavenly onslaught”, serves as an important allusion to the Genesis flood narrative. The allusion suggests that the event is no ordinary overflow, but a divine reversal of creation that will, potentially, wash away the corruption and violence that informs national practices.

On the day after the explosion at the Bastille, Bernard is euphoric. His cheerful reassurance that “[t]oday seems like a new epoch” (268) is a potent contrast to the ominous ambience of death and destruction at the Bastille:

buildings were radiant, faces passed each other with an otherworldly clarity, and the trees sighed and sparkled. Bernard sat on the edge of a fountain to think and watch it all turn about him. Pigeons wheeled overhead in the dizzy sunlight, and voices called to each other here and there through the exultant patter of the falling water. His face was wet with rainbow spray, and yet in the middle of all this he felt clear-headed and alive. (Ibid.)

Bernard sees the buzzing metropolis as a paradisiac place; Paris resembles a beautiful garden. It is brightly lit and resonates with pleasant sounds of water and conviviality. The city appears as magical site because its physical environment of buildings, trees, sunlight, and water burst with animation and energy. Pigeons, archetypal icons of peace, soar in the sky above. When seen in conjunction with the “heavenly onslaught” that flooded the Bastille, the rainbow-coloured light reflected in the spray from the fountain inevitably alludes to the biblical motif of Noah’s covenant with God in the Genesis; the promised era after the flood of peace and prosperity. The passage promises a hopeful future for Paris and for Bernard. Bernard sits “in the middle of it all”, the fountain like an axis around which everything turns. He is suggestively situated at the very heart of city life and observes it from an insider’s perspective. Upon the death of the nation, this archetypal stranger experiences a sense of release. The figure of the migrant and the stranger, who was an unwanted and peripheral character in the national capital, becomes a central character in the global metropolis. Indeed, through the allusion to the flood narrative, Bernard becomes a prophetic, or even messianic figure. The flood motif is of particular significance, first because it invokes an ancient mythic motif, and second, because it solidifies this story as a tale about transformation and rebirth. It thus presents globalisation as the herald of an intrinsically new world order. In contrast to “The House of the Frankfurt Mapmaker”, this change is represented as a positive, even divinely orchestrated, development. Accordingly, whereas in “The House of the Frankfurt Mapmaker”, globalisation induced a state of crisis, in “The Changeling” it is a celebratory harbinger of a more harmonious world.

After the out-break of the small-pox virus, the French government initiates a “slicing up” of the city into a rectilinear, contracting pattern so “all movement and therefore all spread of the disease, would eventually cease” (274):

first, steel fences along all the major boulevards, cutting the city into large sections, and then finer and finer networks of barricades within those sections. The increasingly fractal pattern that appeared on the wall-sized map of Paris looked precise and beautiful. ‘Thank God for Haussmann,’ someone said. (Ibid)

The layout of the Parisian streets, designed by Georges Éugene Haussmann during the mid 19th century, serves as a template for the government’s barricades. Haussmann’s city plan is characterised by geometric grids and symmetry, a hallmark of visual order and efficiency and it was a central instrument in the remaking of Paris into a modern national capital. In “The Changeling”, the nation is associated with this artificially induced and systemically sustained order of uniformity and comprehensibility. Relatedly, , Dasgupta argues that “the idea of the total, centralised, maximally efficient, planned city has long since lost its futuristic appeal: its confidence and ambition have turned to anxiety and besiegement” (Dasgupta, 2006c, p. 38). Certainly, in “The Changeling”, the streets of Paris are overtaken by anxiety and besiegement. As the government erects geometrical barricades in a contracting pattern, Paris closes in on itself. The capital is divided into ever-smaller confines until individual homes are sequestered; “people barricaded their houses [...] reinforcing garden gates and taping up gaps in the casement windows” (273). The grid-like structure constitutes a systemic network. It casts a steel ‘net’ of governmental control over Paris which keeps everything and everybody firmly in place. Paradoxically, in an effort to protect its citizens, the democratic state implements an unbending, or ‘steely’, totalitarian regime of government regulation:

soldiers were deployed in a defensive ring to prevent all intercourse between Paris and the rest of the world [...] their presence was reinforced with the most enormous system of barricades seen in France since the First World War. Steel grids were placed across any underground routes that bypassed the barricades, and all entrances were placed under armed guard. (271)

The capital looks like a war zone. Chaotic violence spreads; there is a military presence on the streets; and a totalitarian rule, an ‘emergency state’, is implemented. “The Changeling” repeatedly emphasises this connection between national sovereignty and systemic practices of coercion which seek to impose homogeneity and conformism. The nation-state draws upon desperate measures in an attempt to sustain, at least, the illusion of national coherence and sovereignty in a world that is increasingly governed by global networks.

Rather than preserving the capital, however, these governmental measures split up the city. The steel fences are “slicing up the city” and the pattern that emerges as a result is “fractal”, approximating a breakage of bones (274). Like the skeletal structure supports the human body, the streets of Paris form a connective edifice that joins diverse parts of the city. In accordance with the imagery of Paris as a superorganism, the governmental dissection of the city into quarantined zones appears as a clinical and surgical procedure of dissection, a physical dismemberment of the body of the city. Once depleted of life and movement, what remains is “[o]nly the city’s skeleton” (278).

At the beginning of the story, Paris teems with words, signifying communication and exchange. Bernard’s search for Fareed’s word takes him to meeting places and hubs of various kinds. He goes to Les Halles; a combined shopping centre and a busy rail station. He looks at CDs, flyers, and printed t-shirts, all commercial products circulating their distinct messages through networks of global consumer culture. Bernard also explores the spoken words of social networks, listening “closely and without embarrassment to what everyone around him was saying” (268). After the quarantine, however, Paris looks very different, like an eerie ghost town. “All the words seemed to have gone” and “[o]nly the city’s skeleton still bore its labels: traffic signs, stone inscriptions, street names” (278). The city has transformed into a static structure, a skeletal body. Its life has been extinguished with the cessation of communication and movement between people. Left is a stagnant sign language. The streets which were previously abuzz with conversations are now “silent save for the guttural moans of pigeons” (ibid.). Before the outbreak the pigeons were emblems of hope that soared above the city and proclaimed a new dawn and a new beginning for the city and its inhabitants. Yet, after the outbreak of the disease and the ensuing systemic regulation, these emblems of hope are reduced to dismal, mournful figures. Bernard’s exuberant hope when the ‘concrete’ confines of the nation had been burst translates here into despondence as authoritarian control keeps in place the remaining physical layout of Haussmann’s ordered national capital.

Alongside the contracting and geometrical pattern of governmental barricades, Bernard’s search for Fareed’s word of the future establishes a contrastingly expansive and organic pattern. Bernard “tackl[es] one or two arrondissements each day, in numerical order, and thus trac[es] a spiral out from the centre of Paris towards its periphery” (270). He undertakes his

quest in an outward spiralling movement from the centre of the capital, gradually expanding his search.

These two opposing movements, one contraction, the other of expansion, capture the orientation of national and global outlooks, respectively. The national perspective looks inward. It is concerned with upholding an illusion of uniformity and coherence within the bordered confines of the nation. The global perspective looks outward, aware of and seeking out expansive horizons. In “The Changeling”, the bordered national outlook is associated with tradition and with the past, while the expansive global outlook is entangled with the future through the cyclical motif of death and rebirth.

During his search for Fareed’s word, Bernard arrives at Montparnasse Cemetery. The space looks remarkably like a miniature version of the capital as it appears after the erection of the government’s barricades:

The quiet order of the place was relaxing. It was a city in its own right, this rectilinear metropolis of the dead; but it was a city that did not assault you with its scale [...] On every side of the large expanse of the cemetery he could see the buildings of Paris: 1970s apartment blocks, Montparnasse Tower of course, and, towards the Seine, a number of newer corporate towers. And beyond them – were those the spires of La Défence? ‘There is more peace here, among the dead,’ thought Bernard. ‘Perhaps this is a better place for words to grow.’ He examined the tombstones, but they were frustrating in their brevity, their repetitiousness [...] There were no words here. (279)

The straight rows of tombs mirror the geometrical pattern of barricades in Paris. Like the wall-sized map of quarantined zones modelled after Hausmann’s plan of the city, the cemetery emits an air of lucid organisation and predictability. The inscriptions on the tombs are ‘carved in stone’ and thereby unchangeable, fixed in time and space. When visitors come to commune with the departed, they enter into a non-meeting. Conversations with the departed are like soliloquys with a dead audience. Albeit relaxing in its quiet order, the cemetery is bereft of the social interaction that defines the modern metropolis, and so, this city of the dead cannot sprout new words. The cemetery is indeed a “city of the dead”, a necropolis within the metropolis. Like the inscriptions on the tombstones, the cemetery seems to be frozen in time and dedicated to a veneration of the past. When contrasted with the view

of skyscrapers that surround it, the site assumes an anachronistic air. The size of the surrounding city dwarfs the otherwise “large expanse” of the graveyard. The new buildings are epitomes of hypermodernity in their architecture and massive scale. The skyline continues far beyond Bernard’s field of vision and appears endless in its reach, signifying the expansive orientation of a global metropolis. This view of Paris as a global metropolis encroaches upon the cemetery. It threatens to overrun the gated confines of this miniature version of the territorially enclosed capital, and indeed, of the bordered nation.

The government’s efforts to quarantine Paris by putting a stop to all movement within and out of the city cannot be wholly achieved. Everywhere Bernard finds traces of people’s transgressions of the steel barriers. He sees a woman sleeping in the back of a car and train carriages which have been occupied by families. There are cafés and shops still open. There are witch-hunts for potential scapegoats, and families afraid of separation search for their relatives. A pedestrian sovereignty has taken over the streets of Paris that opposes and thus subverts the government’s net of control. In contrast to Hausermann’s map of manageable zones, Bernard’s street-view perspective reveals that life in the city cannot, in reality, be fully controlled.

When Bernard despairs about the barricades, which he feels hinder his quest for Fareed’s word, he meets Albert Kenette. Kenette explains to Bernard: “Come now. You are making mountains out of molehills [...] You really should use your head. No barrier is for *everyone*. And the people for whom it is not always need their own way of getting through” (280). While the hypermodern buildings of Paris are evocative of a global metropolis, Albert Kenette is the metropolitan citizen. He understands that the government’s cordons are not finite barricades, but erected structures that can be easily circumvented. In the midst of the “emergency era” (274) of national dis/ease, Kenette remains unaffected and jovial with a “jauntiness [that] seemed completely out of place” (276). Kenette is at ease in the midst of chaos and seems to consider pandemonium equivalent of normalcy. Whilst the poor are hunted down, he merrily observes Paris from a coffee stand, casually sipping “a cup of steaming coffee” (ibid.). While whole families live in “stationary train carriages”, Kenette moves freely around in the city (278). Clearly, whereas some are immobilised by the barricades, others retain freedom of movement.

Kenette is the vice-president of a global corporation:

‘Here – why don’t you take my business card in case you need anything else?’ He placed a card ceremoniously in Bernard’s hand. ALBERT KENETTE VICE PRESIDENT (SALES) (FRANCE) SYNTIME INC. [...] Its steely logo did not quite fit with his appearance. Bernard turned the card over. It read: SYNTIME, noun An experience of time in which past and future moments exist simultaneously in the present. SYNTIME INC. Global business processes. (281)

Kenette’s card displays France in parenthesis. Within his metier of global business the nation is reduced to an afterthought. Thus, corporate globalisation establishes an autonomous order of rule that operates independently of national and governmental constraints. Yet, the “steely” logo on Kenette’s card offers a subtle link to the government’s steel barricades and suggests that the global corporation is, perhaps, no less regulatory than the nation itself. The SynTime logo represents a recognisable brand and an alternative border technology that operates through trade monopolies and copyrights rather than territorial national confines. Kenette is “extravagantly dressed” (280) in a “finely tailored jacket with a silk cravat that overflowed from the collar of his shirt” (276). His “gallantry verge[s] on the absurd” (*ibid.*), and his lavish appearance give him an air of privilege associative of the gentry in the past. He is an amalgam of a traditional gentleman and a business mogul and thus personifies a conflation of residual and emergent sovereignties. Arguably, the amalgamation hints at the extensive power exerted by global corporations in the present.

It is from Albert Kenette’s discarded business card that Fareed’s garden sprouts behind the hotel where he and Bernard are staying. Frustrated that the word continues to elude him, Bernard “tore up the card and let the pieces flutter down into the darkness” of the garden where “a few rusted chairs were grouped pathetically together” (282). The disintegrated SynTime card transforms the garden from an empty and worn place into a flowering meeting point where people gather to listen to Fareed’s songs. The logo, symbolic of a policing of commercial borders, is ripped apart and from its fragments an alternate and more radical border-crossing begins which is unmediated by both governmental and corporate agendas. The power of corporate globalisation to transcend territorial barriers is inadvertently appropriated by Bernard and becomes the seed from which an organic, social network subverts the government’s barricades. As was the case in “The Store on Madison Avenue”,

the figure of the corporation becomes an instigator of border-crossing activities that reach far beyond the financialisation of markets and the globalisation of capital.

In contrast to the ‘steely’ order of both the governmental barricades and of the corporate logo, the garden forms an artless “jumble” (286), a spontaneous rather than imposed order. Fareed is seated at the centre of this sprouting network “in a chair in the middle of the garden” (282). Upon hearing Fareed’s singing, the hotel maid “sat down to listen; a man appeared at the upstairs window of the house behind and stood watching” (283); “windows around the garden filled with people who came to watch Fareed”; and “other guests came down and sat with Bernard” (285). Thus, Fareed’s network grows in an outward direction that mirrors Bernard’s spiralling wanderings of the city:

Bernard made a fire in front of Fareed. Everyone liked it: some climbed over the walls from the surrounding houses to sit around it [...] So the days continued: song by day and fire by night. People broke down all the walls between the yards so they could congregate together to listen to the singing. They dug flower beds in the concrete and planted flowers and vegetables that they cultivated with care. (285-286)

With the fire and the close semicircle of chairs around it, the scene constitutes an archetypal storytelling setting. The campfire recalls the coming together of people throughout human history, accentuating exchange and communication as one of the most basic of human instincts. It remembers that the cacophony of conversations of the metropolis prior to the erection of barricades is the result of an intrinsic human impulse to congregate.

The breaking up of the concrete and the planting of flowers in the earth underneath effects a disruption of Haussmann’s and the government’s artificial and unbending structures, lending space and life to a natural and organic growth. The garden epitomises a ‘grassroots’ “movement” (288); locally contextualised and growing spontaneously out of coincidental and immediate human interactions.

The physical layout of the city is gradually altered as people create a growing number of “poetry gardens” (288), first in the city of Paris, and then around the world. The planting of gardens and exchange of poetry establish a tangible link that ties Paris to the world and envisions the city as a global metropolis, as a node within a network of world-wide exchange. Whereas principles of control and regulation informed the national capital before

and during the outbreak, the new network that extends from the garden is disorderly and convivial.

There “exists no authoritative edition of Fareed’s work”, his words “elaborated and misremembered at every turn” (287). Once uttered, they live on in the imaginative realm of memory that thwarts any attempt at making them ‘concrete’:

the outburst of creativity that happened at that time was both more widespread and more intimate than the publishing and entertainment industries could ever really understand or take advantage of. And there was something about it that caused those industries to stand back even as they gloated over its commercial possibilities. (288)

Even the forces of global corporations cannot exert their dominance over Fareed’s poetry. The garden and the poetry that grows from within it represent a slippery and organic sovereignty that spreads through subtle networks which cannot be systemically surveyed or controlled. “What travelled was more an idea than a set of texts” (287); an original concept of the mind that, in its transience, resists a finite interpretation and appropriation. Fareed’s poetry spreads into the city in an “explosion”, the impact of which is felt even “outside Paris, and indeed across the world” (288). “The Changeling” therefore couples two interrelated explosions: The explosion at the Bastille, a disruptive expansion of physical space, and Fareed’s subsequent imaginative explosion of songs. In other words, the story correlates two interrelated developments; globalisation as time-space compression engenders the emergence of a global imaginary.

There is a strange beauty to Fareed’s sickness: There are “flowers like tiny hyacinths growing tightly packed on wiry green shoots that pushed upwards through the sticky layer of blood” (262) and “a delicious white flower was blooming on a long stem emerging from the man’s navel” (286). His beautiful ailment contrasts the dreadful smallpox virus that causes people’s “bloated skin to burst open” and fall “away in sheets, leaving behind only a bloody mess” (272). Whereas the virus causes bodily and stately decomposition, Fareed’s disease generates an excess of ‘natural’ growth. Rather than disintegrating he becomes more than he was (283): Fareed’s “entire envelope of skin was bursting open in every place, as if he was about to cast it off painfully, perhaps to emerge anew like some glistening reptile” (265). He is absorbed by

these organic growths and becomes an integral part of the garden as the plants, which protrude from his body, “began to take root in the ground where he sat” (ibid.). Thus, his death is depicted as a source of life, albeit in a very different form.

This organic cycle of death and rebirth is also the central theme of Fareed’s final song. In this song, Fareed sings about death as being “the midpoint of the body’s life: for the amount of time it takes for the body to become fully itself is also the amount of time that it takes to decompose and become nothing again” (289). The life and death of the body in the song, mirrors the plot progression in “The Changeling”. The story tracks the transformation of Paris from a dying national capital to a flowering global metropolis. In Fareed’s song, the death of the body is followed by rebirth:

[Fareed] turned [the song] around in time and narrated it again: so that life began with the first fusion of two particles that had been sundered, continued as they gathered more dust around them, and so built a skeleton on to which rotting flesh gradually fixed itself and became full and whole, and then – suddenly! [...] the spirit soared high even as the body was still pale and deathly [...] Gradually, spirit descended to join the body that rose with pride to receive it, and there was childhood, and the diminution of both, and, at the very end, two cells that were sundered – and nothing. (Ibid.)

The fusion of two particles constitutes the beginning of new life and recalls the coming together of Bernard and Fareed at the beginning of the story. Indeed, Bernard and Fareed literally fuse when Bernard is absorbed by Fareed’s growths. Bernard feels that he is becoming “the twitching half of a larger creature [...] and as the last barriers were lifted between their spirits, even the peace of Fareed’s mind came flowing into his own” (291). This fusion of two particles, or nodes, establishes the centre of a new global body or network. In Fareed’s song, the particles gather dust around them and flesh fixes itself to the skeleton. In a similar fashion, after the epidemic the people of Paris repopulate the city and ‘flesh out’ the depleted skeleton of its streets: “People gathered at the points where three or more barriers converged and sang songs to each other; these moved on to the next enclosures, and the next” (287).

Like the body in Fareed’s song is “still pale and deadly” after the small-pox, so, too, does Paris remain “idle and stalked by death”, before it finally “rises with pride” to receive Fareed’s songs; his spirit (ibid.): The songs are appropriated by a creative grassroots

movement and spread on a global scale to become “the anthems of that terrible moment” (267) when Paris was violently transformed. The term, ‘anthem’, is associative with the solemn praise of the exceptional history of the nation. Here, however, new songs of praise are invented that incorporate and venerate the moment when the city of Paris, and by extension the nation, was transformed by globalisation processes. A new history of the nation is being created of how the nation became imbedded within global networks.

At the end of the narrative, Paris “is set in motion again” though people “are still trying to work out what it all meant” (288). Presumably, this event spins the metropolis into a new cycle, the defining mythology, or spirit, of which is born out of a networked rather than a bordered perspective. Like Fareed, then, Paris also becomes more than it was.

In “The Changeling”, systemic national structures are overturned by organic global networks. A global reality encroaches upon and tests the limits of the nation. The French nation, which at its conception was representative of the downfall of oppressive monarchical power and the creation of a revolutionary and democratic national community, has mutated into a space of anxiety and besiegement. The presidential speech to the French people considers that the nation is under attack from an virulent enemy. Thus threatened with a hostile take-over, the city of Paris becomes a ‘state of emergency’, which facilitates authoritarian surveillance and control. Coercive and restrictive structures are erected to keep in place the otherwise corroding national foundations. These steel grids look like the systemic network powers in Hardt & Negri’s *Empire* which also seek to regulate movement and access in order to sustain existing power structures. In “The Changeling”, however, any such endeavour to control networks is thwarted by other network powers that operate through alternate circuits and influence the direction of flows. As *Empire*, then, “The Changeling” also identifies two distinct sovereignties, one systemic, the other grass-roots, both of which operate through networks. Governmental attempts to stem flows into and out of the nation and thereby to keep traditional structures in place comprise an ahistorical project to stagnate an otherwise natural cycle of continuous transformation. Globalisation in the form of communication and exchange appears as a force of nature, as an inexorable development. This conception of globalisation at first glance echoes in disturbing ways with neo-liberal globalisation narratives that present globalisation as an evolutionary process. However, globalisation emerges in “The Changeling” not as the futuristic destiny of mankind, but as the inevitable outcome of a

primordially human impulse to congregate. Globalisation is neutralised and demystified in “The Changeling”, represented as the result of an ancient practice of congregation. The national project to delimit and police physical and conceptual borders becomes by comparison an ‘unnatural’ undertaking.

The explosion at the Bastille and the disruption of the city’s grid-like layout by the disorderly planting of flowers and gardens symbolically conveys that the nation is bursting at the seams. These explosions of the physical and imaginative space of the capital are emblematic of how an unprecedented level of global connectivity has cast into question traditional mythologies of national unity and sovereignty. With its unprecedented level of movement and exchange, globalisation has increased the probability of contagion through expansive networks which, more often than not, cut across national barriers. Contagion is considered here in a broad sense, a virulent spread of anything from lethal pandemics to visionary social trends. In the symbolic language of romance, this state of contagion translates, quite literally, into a nation-wide ‘dis/ease’ caused by the demolition of existing structures. Significantly, in “The Changeling” the cure to this disease is provided not by the sovereign nation-state, but through its opening up to a ‘global community’.

2.2. Temporal Vistas. Uncontainable Energies in *Solo*.

Solo recounts the life and daydreams of Ulrich from Bulgaria. At the age of 100 years, Ulrich is blind, decrepit, and reduced to poverty. He lives by himself in a small flat. Ulrich undertakes a journey through time as he remembers moments of personal significance and combs through memory fragments for some hidden meaning. His memories are scattered and faltering, a testament to his past which is informed by the kaleidoscopic political and social experimentation of Bulgaria in the 20th century. Ulrich's remembered life story starts at the beginning of the 20th century during the early years of Bulgarian independence from the Ottoman Empire. Ulrich experiences the repercussions of the Balkan Wars in 1912-13, the two World Wars, the fascist coup in 1934, the communist coup in 1944, the fall of communism in 1989, and the establishment of democratic rule during the 1990s. At old age, Ulrich journeys to contemporary New York in his daydreams. He imagines that he bears witness to yet another restructuration, namely the coming into being of a new global order.

Solo is comprised of two parts; FIRST MOVEMENT 'Life' and SECOND MOVEMENT 'Daydreams'. 'Life' conveys Ulrich's memories of his long life, informed by the series of revolutions in the 20th century. His life and destiny are intertwined with the waxing and waning of World history in the 20th century. Significantly, Ulrich's life story offers a narrative of the 20th century that challenges the dominant narrative of modernity, of continuous 'progress' and increasing global connectivity. Dasgupta has commented that in *Solo* he "wanted to write a history of the West that went against the increasing Hollywoodization of the 20th century" (Dasgupta, 2012). This story, he says, would counter dominant conceptions of this moment as "a *great* time, all the right people won, and things just got better and better, and people made more money, they became more mobile, technology got better, life got better" (ibid.). He wanted instead "to write another story of the 20th century, which was in some ways the opposite of that: of life getting *smaller*" (ibid.).

Accordingly, in 'Life' Ulrich's horizon gradually reduces in scope. His life begins within the broad context of the Ottoman Empire. With Bulgarian independence it is reduced to Europe, and then to the Soviet Bloc of Central and Eastern Europe during communism. Ulrich's personal life, too, becomes increasingly 'smaller'. Boris, Ulrich's only childhood friend, is executed for sedition; his wife Magdalena leaves him; and his parents pass away. At

the end of his life, Ulrich is alone, decrepit, and blind. He is confined to his flat; his only remaining connections with the world outside are a helpful neighbour and his TV.

‘Life’ might be classified within the genre of historical realism. However, this FIRST MOVEMENT in *Solo* also incorporates fabulous elements. Indeed, Ulrich himself is a mythical figure; his 100 years of age constitutes a fabulous storytelling motif and an almost super-human perspective. His life is a grandiose metonym for the history of the World, a panoramic and mythical motif indeed.

While ‘Life’ conveys Ulrich’s lived experiences in the past, the SECOND MOVEMENT ‘Daydreams’ tells of Ulrich’s fantasies about his present and his future. Alone in his flat, Ulrich dreams up visions of the outside world from which he is physically isolated and yet, with which he is also keenly in tune. In contrast to his past life, a story of increasing isolation, his fantasies about his present moment are characterised by worldwide connectivity.

‘Daydreams’ represents a marked change from ‘Life’ in terms of narrative style. The realism of ‘Life’ fittingly shifts to romance when the setting changes from Ulrich’s lived experience to the abstract realm of his imagination. Here, characters and places appear clearly as constructs. The characters Ulrich imagine are archetypal and have near-supernatural abilities. Their environments are fabulous as well, governed by coincidence rather than by linear logic. The two MOVEMENTs in *Solo* are further divided into ‘chapters’. The chapters have storytelling openings, e.g. “In a small industrial town some two hundred kilometres from the Bulgarian city of Rousse lived a youth named Petar” (173), “In Tbilisi, the picturesque capital of the Georgian Soviet Socialist Republic, it is a cloudless evening near the end of May 1981” (193). However, whereas in romance, time and place is often unspecified, events playing out in a ‘far-away land’ and a ‘time long-ago’, the openings in ‘Daydreams’ situate the story specifically and so breaks with the traditional form. Thus, alongside their fabulous traits, Ulrich’s daydreams are also, to some extent, referential to his lived reality. They mingle the familiar and the strange, the realistic and the fabulous.

There is a notable shift in tempo between the two MOVEMENTs in *Solo*. The fabulous events in ‘Daydreams’ initiate an almost breakneck speed after the process of slow digression in ‘Life’. The series of revolutions in ‘Life’ are systemically imposed in the name of the civilizational and moral ‘progress’ of all of humanity. Following the trope that intertwines the destiny of Ulrich with that of the World, Ulrich has similarly grand visions for his future on a

personal level. He hopes one day to “have one of those historic moments of realisation”, to have “earth-shattering ideas” of similar import and standing to those of his idol, Albert Einstein (26). However, these lofty plans are thwarted. The systemic revolutions, which were supposed to further the ‘progress’ of humanity, cause societal collapse. Ulrich’s personal quest for greatness ends in disappointment. Thus, Ulrich’s life –and by extension the history of humanity in the 20th century– is, to his mind, “a failure” (166). In his daydreams, by contrast, the collapse of systemic order becomes the catalyst for yet another ‘revolution’. This revolution is different from the revolutions in ‘Life’. It is neither systemically managed, nor ideologically driven by a resolve to construct an improved world order. It arises on a grass-roots level and thrives on the chaos prompted by societal collapse after the fall of communism. As we shall see, the revolutions in ‘Life’ are presented in a despondent, mechanical imagery, while the revolution in ‘Daydreams’ appears in a contrasting imagery of uncontainable energy. The shift in tempo between the realistic and the fabulous modes in ‘Life’ and in ‘Daydreams’, respectively, mirrors Ulrich’s outlook. Whereas in the past creative energies were curbed by increasing systemic management and control, Ulrich sees the present as a time of new possibility. This possibility manifests as different aspects of globalisation and as a sudden widening of Ulrich’s before restricted horizon.

Solo won the prestigious *Commonwealth Writers Prize* in 2010. It is in this sense an academically high-profiled novel. Yet, there are only very few scholarly readings of it. Furthermore, existing engagements with *Solo* privilege only one part of the novel, the FIRST MOVEMENT ‘Life’. They are primarily focused on Dasgupta’s project of rewriting the dominant narrative of 20th century modernity as ‘progress’. They do not consider the ways in which SECOND MOVEMENT ‘Daydreams’ represents the constellations of the contemporary global age and hints at future potentials.

My further analysis of *Solo* is divided into two sections which are centred on parts one and two of the novel, respectively: The first, “Looking Back: Another Story”, explores Ulrich’s past recounted in ‘Life’. It considers how Ulrich’s project of remembering his lifestory constitutes a transformative act of self-narration. The second, “Looking Forward: Revolution”, argues that in ‘Daydreams’ Ulrich is able to reshape the paralysis of nostalgia into a future-oriented vision of emergent possibility. *Solo*’s story of the 20th century reconstructs the dominant narrative of this period as a time of unbroken ‘progress’. It offers

instead a different and perhaps more representative narrative of transformation through rupture.

Looking Back: Another Story in “Life”.

At the age of 100 years, Ulrich thinks back on his life: He is born into the wealthy bourgeoisie of Sofia, his father a railway engineer and his mother Elizaveta an anthropologist. As a child, Ulrich has a passion for music, which is foiled by his father who considers it a waste of time. Instead, Ulrich devotes himself to chemistry and goes on to study at the university in Berlin. Political and social upheaval in Bulgaria bankrupts Ulrich’s parents and Ulrich is forced to abandon his studies and return to Sofia where he finds work as a financial controller. Ulrich’s father dies diminished by his experiences as a soldier in the Balkan Wars. Ulrich’s childhood friend Boris is charged with communist sedition and executed by the fascist government. Ulrich wife Magdalena, Boris’ sister, leaves Ulrich, taking their three-year-old son with her to New York. Ulrich never sees his son again. After the communist coup, Ulrich becomes the production supervisor of a chemical plant. He is discharged with a minimal pension. As he clears out his chemical compounds, acid bursts in his face and blinds him permanently. At the end of ‘Life’, Ulrich is confined to his inner world of memories and daydreams.

Ulrich likens memory to sediment wherein layers of earth settle slowly on top of each other. In “cutaway” (8), the sediment layers are clearly discernible, each marking a distinct period. When viewed together, they comprise a linear record of the passing of time and of gradual transitions. In a similar fashion, a coherent life-narrative hinges separate memories and arranges them into a linear sequence.

In Ulrich’s “modern life” (164), however, transformation happens suddenly and forcefully, obstructing gradual bridging. Ulrich’s chaotic history, which is also the history of 20th century modernity, manifests in a disjointed narrative form that alternates between Ulrich’s present and a past he recalls in fragments, the chronology and factuality of which are uncertain. The narrative is interspersed with lists made by Ulrich in his mind “of journeys he has made, and animals he has eaten [...] A list of things that comprise, in his view, the minimal requirements for a happy life” (40). An ambiguous heading “*item*” precedes each entry with no further appellation or numerical designation that might clarify a thematic or temporal interrelation with other listed items. The arbitrary headings denote an attempt on

Ulrich's part at creating a systematic catalogue, an ordered record. They serve as substitutes for linearity and coherence when Ulrich's memories "do not hang together, or fall into sequence" (43). Making lists allows Ulrich to "assemble the remnants into one place" (44) and "gives him a sense that he is in command of his experiences" (40). Yet, although items are in this manner gathered "in one place", the result is not a comprehensive whole. These items appear in a jumble without a tangible beginning or end. They are recorded in a coincidental sequence since "[w]henver he stumbles upon such a memory, he adds it to a list" (70).

Ulrich's arbitrary lists of things and recollections punctuate the story and strike a narrative dissonance of forced staccato. Notably, his memory fragments are compared to "refugees" (43), indicating that the broken form of "Life" results from considerable trauma:

[Ulrich] read this story in a magazine: a group of explorers came upon a community of parrots speaking the language of a society that had been wiped out in a recent catastrophe. [...] They put the parrots in cages and sent them home so that linguists could record what remained of the lost language. But the parrots, already traumatised by the devastation they had recently witnessed, died on the way. The man feels a great fraternity with those birds. He feels that he carries, like them, a shredded inheritance, and he is too concussed to pass anything on. (8-9)

This depiction of devastation potently conveys loss and dislocation. Ulrich's kinship with the parrots derives from what he imagines to be a shared state of shock and disorientation, likened to painful head trauma. The birds have no sense of the language they "carry" with them, a term that signifies passive transmission. They are unwitting transmitters of the lost language, capable only of a nonsensical reproduction of sound. In a similar fashion, Ulrich possesses an untold and "shredded" history. If there is a deeper significance to be traced from his chaotic "inheritance", a meaningful legacy which can be carried into the future, it remains inaccessible to Ulrich himself.

Ulrich is "combing through his life again" to determine "if he has anything at all to leave behind" (9). By scrutinising "the principal events of his life" (*ibid.*), he hopes to find a hidden meaning and a unifying vision that might offer comprehensibility in a present that is otherwise unrecognisable and strange. However, a description of how Ulrich's memories have been "forced to take shelter in other times and places" (43) reveals his longstanding practice

of repression. He knows that if there is a legacy for him “to leave behind, it will be tangled deep, and difficult to find” (9):

He listened to a television programme about a town that was buried underwater after the construction of a dam. Eighty years later, the dam was decommissioned and dismantled. The lake subsided, the river resumed its previous route, and the town rose again into the sunlight. There had been extensive damage, of course. Water had dissolved the plaster from walls, and roofs had caved in [...] trees had died and the whole town stank of dead fish and river weeds for weeks (8-9)

The underwater town is a metaphor for Ulrich’s fragmented and repressed memories. The ocean has deteriorated the town. In its rotting, abandoned state, it looks like a ghost town. Its buildings are corroded and brittle, the danger of further cave in looms large. Ulrich decides to dismantle the mental barriers that, until now, have stemmed the flood of unwelcome recollections. He “devotes himself to wading through the principal events of his life in order to discover what relics may lie submerged there” (8). Ulrich’s ‘memory lane’ resembles the eerie streets of the town. It contains the accumulated ‘decomposing’ memory material that is his personal history of failure. His wading through these memories will redeem or destroy him: Ulrich will either find the ‘relics’ for which he has been searching, or his memories will overwhelm him, causing physiological collapse. The term relic has a double meaning here. It implies, firstly, that Ulrich’s memories belong to a long-gone, even mythical past. It thus solidifies Ulrich’s diagnosis of his present (global) moment as a time that is inherently different from anything that has gone before. Secondly, and more importantly, it hints at the fundamental, even sacred, significance of these memories. They are symbols of identification. In order to become attuned to this new order, Ulrich must first understand the past circumstances from which it emerged.

In the remerged town, some things remain as if frozen in time: “In every house, things had been left behind. A man found a jar of pickles in a kitchen, and tasted them, and pronounced them still good” (8). Similarly, Ulrich’s own excavation project may result in his discovery of something that, albeit long stowed in the dark recesses of his mind, will be meaningful to him in the present. In his world of submerged memories, “old faces coasted past like comforting submarine monsters, and fine filaments lit up a route to the future” (85). Thus, ‘monstrous’ memories transmogrify through Ulrich’s active evaluation of his past and offer him an ambiguous solace. Such recollections, although fragmented, turn into markers of

identification when they are recognised and inscribed into a life narrative. Once retrieved, the “principal events” of Ulrich’s life anchor him in time and space and provide him with a deeper understanding of his own place in history and in the World.

The building in which Ulrich lives bears a striking resemblance to the decaying underwater town he envisions in his mind. His neighbour remarks that, “[w]ater is still pouring through our ceiling” and “[t]his building is slowly falling down” (115). A leak in Ulrich ceiling “lets in water when it rains. This water has leached slowly into the plaster [...] causing paint to fall and a smell of cisterns to hang continually in the room” (6). Accordingly, the content of Ulrich’s mind is mirrored in his physical environment. Like the metaphorical ‘flood’ of memories that surface once more and threaten to overwhelm him, a corroding force of water trickles through the surface of Ulrich’s physical environment and destabilises it. Such correspondences between Ulrich’s inner and outer worlds activate the language of romance as they blur distinctions between the real and the fabulous, between Ulrich’s lived reality and his abstract imagination.

Ulrich remembers the Bulgaria of his childhood as a convergence point for a multiplicity of cultures and languages. His hometown Sofia was abuzz with the hectic energy of converging worlds:

Jewish and Armenian merchants [...] struck business deals amid scented smoke, silks and spittoons. They could barely understand the speech of women at the market stalls, who sat jangling with iron hoops. The rhythms of commerce were supplied [...] by the gait of camels, which came in trains from all over the Ottoman Empire [...] they were powerless against the Gypsies who came to take over the city now and then, assembling in an afternoon a swarming settlement of skin tents and fires, filling the bazaars with curiosities from abroad. (9-10)

With its camels, silks, incense, and Turkish carpets, this site evokes the feel of a distinctly “Asiatic” (161) bazaar, thus locating Sofia and Ulrich firmly within a Middle Eastern context. The city appears as a hub of global trade, festooned with wares and traders from all over the world. The linguistic diversity of the bazaar is of such extent that the traders who arrive from distant parts of the Ottoman Empire can “barely understand” each other. An abundance of luxurious commodities on offer attests to a time in Bulgarian history defined by prosperity and wealth. The “rhythms of commerce” are energetic and pleasantly provincial, “supplied by

the gait of camels”. Ulrich’s memory of affluent Sofia belongs in a pre-industrial past when the experience of time was yet organic and qualitative.

Ulrich’s childhood is defined by an expansive albeit imperial outlook that mirrors the diversity of the marketplace. Ulrich recalls travels with his parents when his father supervised the construction of a Berlin-Baghdad railway:

Italian, Greeks, Armenians, Turks, Arabs and Kurds, and others from all over the empire [...] advanced with them along the envisioned highway and, as the daylight expired, an endless congregation of wood fires sprang to life under the stars [...] he is lying alone at night under translucent canvas, a blanket folded carefully around him. At the edge of his hearing is the hubbub of the multitude. (12)

This moment constitutes Ulrich’s “earliest memory” (ibid.). His narrative thus begins with a reassuring feeling of being at the very heart of convivial, global activity. The clear and starry sky above a boundless “Anatolian scrub” (ibid.) provides a seemingly endless horizon. Meanwhile, the wood fires evoke a pre-industrial ambience. With Ulrich tugged “carefully” in a blanket, his memory is one of tender reassurance and infinite future potential. The railway provides a tangible proof of an intimate connection between East and West, a testimony to wide-reaching global connectivity. In contrast to the characters in Dasgupta’s airport in *Tokyo Cancelled*, Ulrich does not experience his open world as anonymous or vertiginous. It is instead a safe and comforting space.

After Bulgaria’s independence, the country moves away from its Middle Eastern orientation and turns towards Europe. This shift takes physical form in Ulrich’s memory of the total reconstruction of Sofia at the beginning of the 20th century.³³ He remembers that the Bulgarian bourgeoisie “plotted to turn their provincial Turkish town into a new European capital city” (10):

They studied Berlin and Paris to find out what was required, and all of it – cathedral, tramway, university, royal palace, science museum, national theatre, national assembly – they recreated faithfully in Sofia. At the entrances to the future metropolis were haystacks piled up like mountains to sustain the multitudes of

³³ The planning and transformation of cities is a recurrent trope in Dasgupta’s works, including his latest *Capital* 2014, which holds crucial insights for the attentive reader as to patterns of political, economic, and social organisation. See: Dasgupta, 2006c.

horses carrying stone and steel for the new constructions, and traders and labourers swarmed over the swampy void left by everything that had been torn down. (Ibid.)

The project of remaking Sofia in a European image is a gargantuan enterprise. Rather than adding to existing structures, it encompasses, in Ulrich's mind, a complete rebuilding of the city. Only a "swampy void" is left after the annihilation. The before lively city is transformed into a purported *tabula rasa* to be re-inscribed with a revised architectural record that tells a story of European nation building. However, instead of bustling with energy, Sofia is a razed and infertile landscape of steel, stone, and mud. The new "European national capital" does not arise organically from slow historical change, but suddenly and forcefully. Its new layout is systemically imposed so as to emulate European cities; centres of substantial economic and political power, as well as cultural hotbeds.

The reconstruction of the city, and of the nation, represents a strained effort to physically align Bulgaria with a distinctly European context and thereby to revoke the Asiatic heritage of the region. The swampy void that is left after the deconstruction of the thriving bazaar is filled by a replica of European modernity and nation-building. The contrast between Sofia before and after the Bulgarian reorientation conveys a clash between the romanticised Middle Eastern past and this forced European imitation. The juxtaposition evokes a sense of nostalgia and loss. The stability and reassurance of Ulrich's childhood world is reduced to a memory site, accessible only in Ulrich's mind.

Ulrich's inheritance is an amalgam of Middle Eastern and European influences. He is the product of a precarious union between East and West, personified by his quarrelling mother and father. Elizaveta has a "consuming passion" (14) for the affairs of the Asiatic region and her notebooks are "full of observations about their beliefs and customs" (13). She embarks on "rural expeditions" and visits with "local women" (ibid.). Her notebooks constitute an attempt to preserve traditional, local knowledge at a moment in time when Bulgaria is transforming from a provincial territory within an Ottoman Empire into a metropolitan European nation. She is a custodian of Bulgaria's Asiatic ancient heritage. Suggestively, her life's endeavour is the creation of a "Bulgarian-Arabic dictionary" (149). The dictionary attests to a rising need for translation and is a physical expression of the linguistic and cultural breach that grows between Bulgaria and its Middle Eastern context.

Ulrich's father is, by contrast, the embodiment of Bulgaria's European affiliation. He has a "love affair with all things German" (9) and a "passion for machines" (15) that juxtaposes Elizaveta's affection for the pre-industrial, Asiatic past. Ulrich's father often daydreams that he "hovered above the cartoon face of the planet, now wrapped in twin lines of steel and given over, finally to science and understanding" (10). His fanciful panorama zooms out, until the entire planet is envisioned within a single frame. In his extreme zoom-out, distinguishing details are eliminated and the Earth appears as a uniform space governed by 'objective' Enlightenment principles. It is the steely grip of Western modernity, represented by the rails, which keeps the world in place: This imagined global order comes together within a European framework. His "reverie" (10) iterates a globalisation narrative of modernisation. It casts globalisation as a deceptively impersonal and unstoppable force of industrial progress that will, eventually, be beneficial to all.

Ulrich's father sermonises about the industrial revolution of the railways to a fellow passenger on a train:

'Do not look at the poppies outside your window, madam, for they race more rapidly than your senses can apprehend. Look instead at the church spires and mountains in the distance, whose movements are more steady. For this is the vision of our new times: we have been liberated from the myopia that kept human beings peering at their own miserable patch of earth, bound to proclaim with sword and drum its superiority to every other. From now on, they will see far, and look upon a common future!' (11)

His grandiose rhetoric envisions the coming of a new era in terms of a revolutionary change of perspective. A different time is drawing close, so Ulrich's father believes, which will be defined by a de-territorialised outlook, the focus of which is on an expansive, or panoramic, context rather than local particularities. He imagines the emergence of an unprecedented high-civilisation brought about by connective technologies, contrasted here by a comparably primitive past of crude warfare over bounded territories. Ulrich's father thus serves here as a mouthpiece for the Grand Narrative of modernity which conflates technological advancement and industrialisation with an "implicit theory of moral evolution which we call 'progress'" (Beck, 2008, p. 1).

Yet, even in the vivid imagination of Ulrich's father, this global utopia is a "cartoon" (10). Its cartoonist features border on caricature or parody and thus hint at the unrealistic

quality of his connective vision. Certainly, when viewed through the temporally distant lens of Ulrich's present, the endeavour to intimately link East and West seems an impossible fantasy. Ulrich thinks about the war in Iraq and wonders: "Bulgaria is sending troops to assist the Americans in their occupation. He pictures the journeys of his childhood, when Baghdad was part of his family [...] How time changes things" (40). Clearly, globalisation in the form of modernisation and industrialisation has not given rise to an era of 'enlightened' cosmopolitan practices.

Ulrich recalls the newspaper headings at the time of communist upheaval in Bulgaria during the 1920s and 30s, all of which register the continual fading of his father's connective vision. They record "'the misery of defeat' and 'economic collapse' and 'more convulsions in the Balkans'" (49). In order to retain control, the king decides "that he will tear the city apart and root out the terrorists for good" (ibid.). This 'tearing apart' of Sofia envisions Bulgaria's internal fragmentation as a violent physical dismemberment. The capital takes on an increasingly ominous aspect and comes to resemble the eerily abandoned city of Paris as it appears in "The Changeling" in *Tokyo Cancelled*: "Police are lining every street" (56) and after the fascist coup in 1934 "democratic freedoms [are] cancelled, political parties abolished, and espionage and surveillance reign in every sector of society" (85). Democratic rule is supplanted by a new sovereignty of stringent and all-encompassing systemic control. The place that was one of expansive horizons in Ulrich's childhood transforms into an empty and claustrophobic site. When Ulrich and Boris walk the streets of Sofia "the echo of their footsteps ricocheted between the rows of houses [...] There were bats overhead, and a sense of life pent up behind locked doors. Cats wailed" (63). Sofia is a dark and gothic place where life and energy are locked up or curbed.

In the midst of disorienting societal chaos, Ulrich turns to his bookkeeping profession for a supplement of order and stability. This job provides a welcome "sense of finitude" that gives him "surprising relief" (67). Ulrich "immersed himself in grids of numbers" (ibid.), a term of phrase that suggests complete absorption. His immersion in this domain of unfailing order is an act of repression that alleviates the "ache in his head" (ibid.):

When his thoughts were not occupied with bookkeeping, Ulrich could not prevent himself wondering how so much had been snatched away from him so fast. He

tried to deny it had happened: he played tricks on himself, marking time in Sofia by the timetable in his Berlin diary, full of far-off lectures and exams. He even chose to ask directions around his home town, and feigned gaps in his Bulgarian speech (67-68)

During his time as a student of chemistry, he experienced Berlin as “a miraculous metropolis” (43); a place of otherworldly possibility. Now back in Sofia, he re-enacts that period in his life when everything seemed possible and he dreamed of becoming a world-famous scientist. By transferring the timetables from Berlin to his present context, Ulrich muddles the distinction between memory and reality, past and present. To escape, at least, the cognisance of opportunities lost, he transports himself to an alternate time and place. He performs empty gestures to sustain his make-belief of unbroken chemical studies: He acquires “manuals for practical experimentation” (84), sets up a make-shift laboratory in his home, and fills it with “bottles [...] embossed with a skull and crossbones” (75). Thus, surrounding himself with physical signs of another world, he creates the illusion of the past in the present. In his mind, Ulrich remains stranded in the past that never was. His wife, Magdalena, reproaches him for his deliberate displacement:

‘Think of Einstein. While he was doing his routine job in the Swiss Patent Office he managed to come up with his greatest theories. Perhaps something like that will come to me!’ [...] She said, ‘Ulrich! Face up to reality! Sometimes I wonder if you know what the word means.’ He looked at her strangely, and exclaimed, ‘What is reality? Is it this? – and he banged the table excessively, then the wall – ‘is it this?’ (73-74)

Ulrich unrealistically expects that, by clinging to the now impotent emblems of his past, the future he dreams of will ‘come to him’. This wording reveals a passive approach that does not match Ulrich’s wishful comparison of himself to that mastodon of physics, Albert Einstein. Indeed, his own experiments are but “gimmick[s]” (45) and “chemical tricks” (72). The greatest discovery of his chemical ‘career’ was when, as a child, he made a “powerful glue that his mother adopted, with no apparent dissatisfaction” (26). The immense discrepancy between Ulrich’s dream of greatness and his reality conveys that he cannot properly distinguish fact from fancy. Ulrich’s confusion is epitomised by his questions (‘What is reality?’) and by his frustrated banging on the furniture which seems designed to ascertain the

materiality of his present condition. While Ulrich's denial offers him relief, it also produces paralysis. By living in the past, he becomes incapable of navigating in the present.

The communist revolution in 1944 reinvents Bulgaria as a Soviet satellite and, once again, uproots Ulrich's life. Ulrich is informed by a government official that it "has been decided at the highest levels: Bulgaria will be the chemical engine of the socialist countries" (93). The conception of Bulgaria as an "engine" reduces the nation to a mechanical spare part of a wider machinery that produces industrial output; an automated component which can be made to perform so as to serve a remote ideological factory located at the centre of a *de facto* imperial Soviet Russia. We recall the convivial, animated imagery through which Ulrich's childhood is conveyed. The imagery of Bulgaria as a machine is, by comparison, uncannily soulless. Industrial modernisation appears here not as the means towards a solidary, humanitarian end, but as a production engine of dehumanising practices.

Ulrich is himself incorporated into this well-ordered Soviet machinery, headhunted by the new government for his chemical knowledge. As a child Ulrich is fascinated by the aptitude of chemistry to generate "an infinite range of expression [...] from a finite number of elements" (25). He sets up a laboratory in a "dim shed" and fills it with a "constant chemical haze", "beakers and retorts" (26). The shed seems to him an unordered place of inconceivable "magic" where he hopes to "have one of those historic moments of realisation" (26). He reads "biographies of inventors" and the "stories of the rickety domestic workshops in which eccentric inventors tinkered uncertainly towards earth-shattering ideas" (26). Thus, what interests Ulrich in chemistry are its experimental, haphazard forms: The potential for new discoveries through a practical and intuitive engagement with the field. Even as a student in Berlin he exclaims that, "'I want to *make* stuff, [...] 'I didn't come to study mathematics. I want to make plastic!'" (47).

Ulrich devotes himself to the development of plastics, a material created from polymers; that is, from connective chains of single molecules, monomers. He is consumed by the idea that "there might exist molecules much more extensive than any hitherto imagined. These giant molecules [...] would be arranged in mobile, chain-like structures" (43). To Ulrich, there is at the heart of the study of plastics a principle of unification, of molecules coming together to create unprecedented forms. The "chain-like structures" of these "giant molecules" evoke a potentially limitless chemical network of interconnecting elements that

holds molecules of “unusual flexibility” (ibid.) together. In these terms, Ulrich’s passion for chemistry derives from a more general fascination with connectivity at the most fundamental molecular level. He is adamant that this revolutionary production of new materials “transformed the human environment [...] a host of extra-terrestrial substances that produced bodily sensations that no one had ever experienced before” (ibid.). Ulrich’s scientific excitement is thus tied to innovation and experimentation. However, the chemical factory where he is employed is a site of reproduction. Rather than implementing modern production methods, his superiors’ “approach to technical problems was crude. To increase the factory’s productivity they wanted simply to build more of the same” (123). The plant “was built for the production of barium chloride, and its design was an architectural expression of the chemical process: 1. $\text{BaSO}_4 + 4\text{C} \rightarrow \text{BaS} + 4\text{CO}$ 2. $\text{BaS} + \text{CaCl}_2 \rightarrow \text{BaCl} + \text{CaS}$ ” (95). The plant has one single purpose: To endlessly perform the two-step extraction of one salt. Opposed to Ulrich’s childhood laboratory, a place of experimental adventure, the factory reproduces the same process over and over. A “gratifyingly simple” and “logical universe” (101), the factory is a site of repetition, rather than innovation.

Ulrich does persuade his superiors to install a new reactor. At this event, his boss Comrade Denov praises Ulrich, “*You have worked a revolution in our factory*” (124). The italicised appraisal marks the significance of Ulrich’s feat. Although he finds himself within a system governed by unthinking repetition, he succeeds in modernising production methods, albeit on a minor scale. Yet, even this memory of personal achievement is embittered. Radio Sofia names Ulrich “an ordinary hero” by (125), an ambiguous nomination that blatantly refutes his dreams of personal distinguishment and solidifies his everyman status.

Whereas Ulrich once envisioned that chemistry would be a source of a global scientific revolution, it warps into a lethal science in the hands of the ideological Soviet factory. Ulrich remembers that with the chemical industrialisation of Bulgaria “everything around him turned to chemistry” and Bulgaria itself converted into “a chemical state” (119):

The rivers ran with mercury and lead, and hummed with radioactivity, fishing had dried up on the Black Sea coast, and, every year, more fields and forests were lost. [...] Arsenic flowed straight into the Pirdropska river, and dead fish piled up downstream in enormous stinking banks. Bulgarian sheep had miscarriages and

died, and the cows went mad. Children were born with cancers and deformities.
(160)

Bulgaria as a “chemical state” has a suggestive double meaning. First, it renders the nation in reductive terms as the product of a single, repetitive industry. It signifies the fulfilment of Bulgaria’s diminution into an “engine” in the Soviet machinery. Second, it refers also to the metaphorical properties of the chemical condition of toxicity. The contaminated land and putrid smell of the dead fish which are “piled up” in “enormous” quantities symbolise an internal crisis of the nation itself. The construction of a Soviet Bulgaria resembles a chemical experiment gone awry. Rather than inventing new, exciting forms (of social organisation), it effects (societal) dissolution. Communism has not revolutionised the old world order and instigated a new order governed by democratic ideals. It has instead furthered totalitarian control. By thus imposing monotonous patterns of automated reproduction, the communist “system” (160) has inadvertently created a barren, even deadly, environment that thwarts creativity and vitality.

Bulgaria is no longer recognisably Middle Eastern or European, but assumes instead an ominously faceless aspect. The Bulgarian landscape of Ulrich’s memory becomes progressively industrial and inanimate:

The road was abandoned. Black factories went by, and orange housing blocks and flocks of goats [...] Steel chimneys slashed the horizon, and white reactors clambered over it like domed pastries. In the distance, the ground gave way to a sea of mercurial piping [...] The land was very flat, and monumentally empty. (145-147)

The scenery is taken over by bleak industrial structures. The slashing of the horizon and clambering over the land feels like an invading, physical molestation. Ulrich’s world, which at the beginning of his life was peopled by multitudes of life, is reduced to one overarching chemical and toxic factory. Ulrich observes that “like all his compatriots” he “has become chemical himself, his blood a solution of cadmium, lead, zinc and copper” (160). Like his surrounding environment, a “chemical disaster” (ibid.), Ulrich is reduced to a soulless chemical compound. His existence has devolved into molecular disintegration. Ulrich’s act of narrative remembrance, which began within the seemingly boundless horizon of the Ottoman Empire, ends here at a point of absolute zero as Ulrich is himself split into atoms.

Ulrich witnesses the final dissolution of his world on the television that transmits the fall of communism and the ensuing rise of capitalism in the 1990s. He experiences these events through remote viewing, a distant and passive observer:

Bulgaria became Asiatic again, as it had been when Ulrich was born. Big-breasted Bulgarian singers embraced the long-suppressed Turkish and Arabic music and turned it into anthems for the new gangster society. Heroin poured in from Afghanistan. Criminal companies selected the best-looking Bulgarian girls to work in brothels in Dubai. The world returned to war [...] People said, *Now our country is open!* But even if it had been possible for Ulrich to journey to the places of his life, they all seemed to be in flames. (161-162)

Bulgarian ties to the Middle East are restored. However, in contrast to the convivial bazaar of Ulrich's childhood, Bulgaria appears here as an integral part of an illegal global market. The trade routes that now link Bulgaria to the world transport disturbing wares. Rather than the incense, textiles, and brassware of old Sofia, human trafficking and dangerous drugs are the primary national exports. These flows of illegal commodities and dehumanised subjects are disconcerting signifiers of Bulgaria's re-incorporation into a global context. Therefore, albeit "open" and linked up with a global web, this ruthless Bulgaria is not the utopia of Ulrich's father's unified vision. Contrary to his globalist reverie of celebratory modernity, Bulgaria's embeddedness within worldwide networks of 'development' does not herald an ideal and peaceful era. Indeed, as Ulrich recalls: "They said, *Now we are capitalist!* – but all [he] could see was criminality raised up to principle. Murderers and thieves took over and called themselves *businessmen*" (161). Under the communist regime, corruption, surveillance, and genocide happened under an ideological cover, "[i]n the name of the People" (90). By contrast, for the emergent "gangster society" criminality has become a "principle" in itself, subsumed under a discourse of "*business*" and without any public performance of ideological justification or a common cause; for, "they lived out in the open and everyone could see their incredulous carnival" (161). In this light, the jubilant italicised slogans that hail the new capitalist cynicism and openness assume a repetitive and hollow ring. In their monotony they turn into platitudes that celebrate the spread of criminality.

Yet, there is some tragic optimism to be found in this new openness. Alongside the amoral and dehumanising global market, the creative energies of world music also flow

freely. This musical revolution happens after a period during which “prohibitions stamped out the music. Jazz became illegal – and Turkish music, Gypsy music, Arabic music, and most of the other kinds Ulrich had listened to as a child” (96). Music and criminality both seem to spread along an expansive global web within which imaginative and oppressive forces operate confluent. Conceivably, the “debacle” (161) of the new capitalist ‘order’ ends a century of stifling authoritarian control and therefore, though it grows out of a chaotic and fragmented condition, implicitly hints at a tentative optimism for the future.

The narrative structure of ‘Life’ is split into sections by headlines that correspond to the chemical elements: “*Magnesium*”, “*Carbon*”, “*Chlorine*”, “*Barium*”, and “*Uranium*”. Each element invokes a chain of Ulrich’s recollections that cluster around one particular memory. “*Magnesium*” recalls a childhood memory of how, on “their voyages abroad, Ulrich’s mother had always carried magnesium wire for lighting the interiors of caves and ancient buildings” (25). Magnesium is thus a symbolical marker of Ulrich’s early childhood informed by extensive travel and exploration. In a similar manner, “*Carbon*” relates to the memory of a visit to Boris’ home where Ulrich sees “a framed sketch of Boris. The artist had drawn only one continuous line, but in its charcoal loops and zigzags it captured exactly the way he looked” (53). This element becomes a point of departure for Ulrich’s memories about his late childhood and adolescence which were defined by his close friendship with Boris. Ulrich also remembers “the acrid odour of chlorides” (100) that hung perpetually in the air at the leather company where he worked as a financial controller. “*Chlorine*” comes to signify a period of Ulrich’s life characterised by obsessive (self)regulation and systemic control. It denotes his disorientation and recalls his deliberate temporal displacement. “*Barium*” is linked to the production of barium chloride at the chemical plant. Ulrich’s memories about his involvement with the chemical industrialisation of Bulgaria coalesce around this element, an emblem of the devaluation of his passion for chemistry. Lastly, “*Uranium*” refers to the toxic infestation of the Bulgarian landscape which “hummed with radioactivity” and “the Bukhovo uranium mine [that] flooded Sofia with lead, sulphur, dioxide, hydrogen sulphide, ethanol and mercury” (159-160). Uranium thus serves as a link for Ulrich’s recollections of how Bulgaria dissolved into a deadly and arid environment. Moreover, it is emblematic of the disintegration of the self as Ulrich’s ever-changing “world itself has become nonsense” (167). The five chemical elements are “relics” of Ulrich’s past. Each of them is a carrier of personal

significance and an orientational marker that facilitates Ulrich's fraught navigation through a fragmented history. By organising his memories around these elements, Ulrich arranges them in a temporal and thematic sequence that offers a semblance of narrative linearity. Like the plastics he dreamt to create, these memory fragments form narrative "chain-like structures" which, in their unreliable or corroded state, are of "unusual flexibility" (43). Ulrich's memory fragments thus are gathered into one chemical compound, uniting that which was split apart.

Ulrich's remembered life story constitutes a healing narrative. There is at the end of his endeavour a sense of achievement and an emergent reconciliation with the past:

Thinking back, he realises how much has slipped through the fingers of his memory. Everything he still retains could be told in an afternoon, and yet there is so much more. The substance of all those days, which has entirely escaped. [...] Ulrich's spirit has expanded in these last days, and he is no longer bereft. Though the memories are no longer his, he feels they persist nonetheless. Einstein said, considering his death, *I feel such solidarity with all things, that it does not matter where the individual begins and ends*. When his mind is particularly aware, Ulrich can sense the great black ocean of forgotten things, and, ignoring his beginning and end, he casts of into it. (166-167)

After a lifetime of denial, Ulrich claims his fragmented history. He recognises the impossibility of retaining the "substance" of his life, thus accepting that a single, defining legacy cannot be extracted from his tumultuous history. He no longer mourns the loss of the desired narrative of personal exceptionalism that might rival that of Einstein. Instead, he embraces Einstein's vision of the world as one all-encompassing network wherein individual nodes cannot be defined as separate elements since "all things" are linked. This vision is panoramic: Ulrich's life story is envisioned as a fragment of the boundless Story of the World; one atom within a planetary, molecular structure the infinitude of which obscures distinctive features. Although a single substance, or legacy, cannot be clearly outlined, Ulrich "feels" that it "persist[s]" as an indiscernible but material quantity.

Before his excavation project began, Ulrich's memory was like an ominous submarine domain long repressed. Here, however, he "casts of" into the "ocean" of memories deliberately and with confidence. Fittingly, 'Life' ends with a baptismal or cathartic moment:

Ulrich sensed a new, ripe feeling in the air and now, in the afternoon, the storm is being prepared. Just a succession of pinpricks at the beginning, but swelling to a

single sighing sheet: a sonic layer over everything. The breeze in the window – *thank God!* – and the smell of dust flowing off the roof and dripping from the tree leaves [...] He sees everything in fine grain: the cars are spraying now, the backhiss of radials, and there is the bus park laid out, the long steel roofs resounding like tin drums [...] The windowsill is a delicate pattering bar. (165)

At the beginning of “Life”, a building force of water that symbolised Ulrich’s repressed memories threatened to drown or overwhelm him. Now this imminent danger seems forgotten. Instead, water falls as heaven-sent rain, a benediction. When accompanied by the “new, ripe feeling in the air”, the shower intimates a moment of rebirth. Sofia is rinsed of residual dust, a cleansing. The downpour is described as a figurative sigh of release. For Ulrich, who has lost his eyesight, the rain becomes an alternative way of seeing. As it falls upon “everything”, its sonic impact reveals the world to Ulrich “in fine grain”. Every detail of his environment comes into focus. This clarity of vision offers a striking and positive contrast to his former experience of Sofia as a site “without dimension” (65). Ulrich’s expansive temporal panorama has transformed from a fragmented image to a unifying vision. Ulrich’s past, symbolised by the rain, is no longer a source of blinding paralysis, but a means of orientation. Through a remembering of his personal narrative, Ulrich has recovered the orientational markers that facilitate navigation in time and space.

Looking Forward: Revolution in “Daydreams”.

In SECOND MOVEMENT ‘Daydreams’, Ulrich imagines three young people of the post 1989-generation, Boris, Khatuna, and Irakli. Through their exploits, he ponders on the dynamics of the contemporary moment as representative of a new world order. Boris from Bulgaria has an extraordinary musical talent. He is discovered by Plastic Munari who is a producer for the Universal Music Group in New York. Plastic invites Boris to New York. From there he launches Boris’ first album which becomes an instant global success. Boris, however, breaches his contract by recording with multiple partners and companies outside Universal’s control. Khatuna and Irakli, sister and brother, are born in Tbilisi. Their father dies and the once wealthy family is impoverished. Kakha, a Georgian gangster, discovers Khatuna’s aptitude for business. He employs her and the two of them fall in love. But Kakha is shot and Khatuna flees Georgia with Irakli. Together Khatuna and Irakli go to New York where she finds employment at Struction Enterprises Inc., a large corporation that sells

security solutions. Irakli, who is a poet, is disillusioned by the social discrepancies of the world. He commits suicide, leaving Khatuna bereft. Khatuna decides to leave the US for Baghdad. Meanwhile, an imagined version of Ulrich himself is also in New York. He searches for Boris who is his son. Ulrich finds Boris as he is about to leave America in order to escape Universal's contractual reach. After their brief encounter, Ulrich watches Boris drive off into the distance.

In Ulrich's daydreams, systemic and grassroots networks are competing, though interdependent forces. Plastic Munari supervises and manages the world music industry. He personifies a regulatory, or systemic, aspect of globalisation. By contrast, Boris, Khatuna, and Irakli are representative of erratic global energies which operate through grassroots circuits. They are 'out of control' and their presence in New York destabilises Universal's corporate power. While Plastic believes that Boris, Khatuna, and Irakli are subject to his authoritarian influence, they expertly see through the illusions of his commercial domain and manipulate the music industry, each with their own personal agenda. Once the potential of New York has been depleted, Boris and Khatuna leave America for other, more advantageous, destinations.

The two central characters in *Solo*, Boris and Khatuna, grow out of the global reality Ulrich witnesses on his TV in 'Life': They personify musical artistic contagion and the spread of cutthroat business ideals, respectively. My reading focuses on these two characters in particular. Sneja Gunew has criticised *Solo* for relying "too much on stereotypes associated with Eastern Europe" (Gunew, 2013, p. 139). This view, however, discounts of the profound undecidability and uncontainability of the characters in the novel. Each of them epitomises a particular quality, or aspect, of globalisation. They are deliberately two-dimensional, archetypal rather than stereotypical. These archetypes possess destabilising trickster elements that avert a definitive reading of "Daydreams" in terms of heroes or villains, celebration or crisis. I suggest that Ulrich's global vision depicts a chaotic realm for which there is no ethical map; it is simply a world of confluent, magnetic energies.

Birenbaum writes that in our dreams the characters we conjure up are aspects of the self. As in the genre of romance, the characters in our dreams are rarely multidimensional reflections of individual psychologies, but embody a quality, or serve a particular function within the overall symbolism of the dream. They are manifestations of the mind dispersed,

which, if viewed together, “merge into a whole”; a collective reflection of the dreaming mind itself (Birenbaum, 188, p. 79). According to Birenbaum, archetypal characters “relate to each other in a variety of ways” and one way to understand their “symbolic world [...] is to see it as a network of such interrelations” (Birenbaum, 188, p. 76). The characters in Ulrich’s *daydreams* may be considered as different manifestations of his now globally oriented mind. They are archetypal personifications of the prominent global energies that inform and structure his contemporary moment.

Before venturing a reading of the characters in Ulrich’s *daydreams*, I look at the spaces from which they emerge. These locations hold important clues as to the characters’ function within the story. Boris is born in “a small industrial town” (173) in Bulgaria, while Khatuna is from Tbilisi in Georgia. They derive from different locations in geographical terms and in terms of culture, one rural and the other metropolitan. However, the two locations share an important trait: They are represented in *Solo* as places of chaos and disorder, at the point of societal collapse.

The industrial town where Boris grows up has “seen better times”: Money “did not do what it once had done”; “[h]alf the factory busses had stopped running”; “[t]he old housing blocks were damp and crumbling”; “[b]roken windows and balconies were mended with corrugated iron”; and “there was nothing in the shops” (182). The town is depleted of activity. Its empty stores and economic inflation suggests that all business has stopped and the dwindling number of busses that transport townsfolk to and from work at the local factory confirms the decline of production and export. This complete seize-up of productivity and trade signifies societal crisis and imminent breakdown.

Khatuna’s Tbilisi also emerges as a forbidding site:

There were armed guards at the house, and everywhere they went. The stories Khatuna heard took on a wild edge [...] People were selling off the government’s chemical weapons on the street. There were a wave of suicides and murders. The electricity started to go off for days at a time, and there was no water. (200)

The arrogation of government resources by people on the street attests to the downfall of national organisation, which is further accentuated by the breakdown of water and electronics networks. Armies of hired bodyguards have displaced governmental law and order. They ensure the personal safety of the privileged elite who has sufficient funds to buy private

security. Tbilisi is governed by militarism and organisational justice is non-existent. A rising number of suicides in the city add to the tumult a sense of despair. The remaining energy in the city, it would seem, is chaotic and volatile, supplied by illegal, transgressive activities, including trade in stolen weapons and a sudden wave of murders. All systemic control has broken down. Sovereignty is seized instead by non-governmental, grass-roots forces which establish an alternative (dis)order. In 'Life', the utopian reverie of Ulrich's father ascribed such a militant environment as belonging in a pre-modern past. Here, however, this 'past' is in the present, coupled with a suspension of even the most basic of modern infrastructures. Ironically, Khatuna remarks: "This place is like the end of the world" (214) and her comment captures the overall feel of the domain she inhabits: Defined by conflict and chaos, her part of the globe emerges as a near-apocalyptic site. It looks like a futuristic sci-fi setting, not a technologically backward and primitive past.

The chaotic quality of Boris' Bulgaria and of Khatuna and Irakli's Georgia is significant because it comes to define the characters themselves. They are uncontrollable and out of order, and it is this uncontainability that activates their global power and reach.

Meanwhile, Plastic Munari's offices "on the forty-first floor" in "Midtown" (243) Manhattan also hold important clues as to his archetypal function in Ulrich's daydreams:

His chair was an expensive objet d'art that he'd picked out from a store in Soho. Early Meiji, with gold dragons and cranes flying over Mount Fuji [...] signed *Tokyo: Shibayama* [...] A man who made his money from trends and cycles, predictions and futures, needed to seat himself on the firmness of the past – lest he becomes light headed and float away. In the middle of his office stood an imposing pair of antique globes from Germany. They were his talking piece, when people came. (243)

The chair and the globes are emblems of Plastic's extraordinary wealth. They are proudly displayed as intended "talking piece[s]", and particular attention is given to the signature that authenticates the craftsmanship of the chair and dates its origin. Plastic's pride of ownership is contingent not only on the exclusivity, but first and foremost on the authenticity of these rare collector's items, which he treasures because they are tangible remnants of the past. With the rare antiquities on display, Plastic's offices look like a museum. It is dedicated to a preservation of the past.

The depiction of how Plastic “seat[s] himself” on the impressive Meiji antique presents him as a king on his throne in his palace, wherefrom he rules his corporate empire. One of his “entourage” (276), the term yet another allusion to his near-regal power, speculates: Plastic has done “[m]ore than anyone else I can think of to dictate cultural taste in the world today” (277). Plastic is a dictator in metaphorical terms. His hold over the development of ‘world culture’ is absolute, even tyrannical. Nevertheless, his fascination with “old things” (289) exposes a weakness; for, though Plastic claims to make his money from accurate “predictions” of the future, his calculations are rooted in “the firmness of the past” and so cannot anticipate anything that is intrinsically new. They are indeed ‘predictable’ because they are limited to a repetition of what has gone before. Plastic lives in “the richest nation on earth” (249) and is at the height of power. Yet, the imagery of Plastic’s despotic rule combined with his veneration of authenticity and tradition links him to an outmoded sovereignty. Relatedly, the skyscrapers in New York are “old and scaled like prehistoric fish”; Irakli looks upon the metropolis and he thinks of the word, *Ichthyosaur* (266). Likened to a prehistoric creature, New York is thus a dated space that is out-of-time. To Khatuna it is also “a boring place” (342). The “right-angled city” consisting of “blocs” (296) exudes predictability and order. The characters who arrive here from their realms of chaos and upheaval see this ordered space as fossilised and stagnant.

The two realms inhabited by Boris, Khatuna, and Irakli and by Plastic Munari, respectively, one chaotic and revolutionary, the other ordered and predictable, turn globalist discourses on their heads. The global ‘core’ of power in New York appears in *Solo* not as representative of civilizational and technological advancement, but as a retrograde city. By contrast, the global ‘periphery’ in Bulgaria and Georgia is not a backward site, a Third World or Developing country, but a futuristic source of disorderly innovation. Boris, Khatuna, and Irakli bring this chaotic energy with them to the otherwise stagnant ‘core’, which is in turn transformed by their presence.

The two central characters, Boris and Khatuna, each have a mythical origin story that conveys the source and character of their distinct, near-supernatural powers. Thus, Boris is born in a “small industrial town” (173) in Bulgaria to Petar and Irina. Boris’s parents serve a symbolic function as each of them represent a distinct attribute inherited by their progeny son.

Although Petar is “small and spindly” (173), a “snip of a thing” (175), he volunteers to slaughter the mayor’s prize boar for a celebrative feast in the town. By comparison to Petar, the boar is a “beast” (174) with a head “larger than his torso” and a body as “a long pink mountain of muscle and fat, and its legs were thick as pillars” (175). Equipped only with a knife, the small Petar appears to be in over his head and the slaughter is presented as a variation on the mythical David and Goliath theme: Petar’s stamina and ingenuity finally trumps brute strength. In terms of romance, Petar is the hero that overcomes impossible obstacles. Meanwhile, Boris’ mother Irina is “perfect and fearless, and destined for great things” (178). She makes music and dreams to “join a band some day. Get out of this town” (179). Irina explains that “the world is shit, and full of lies. You need music. Then you understand that none of this matters – this punishment, this stupid Bulgaria” (179). According to Irina, music possesses an almost magical, transcendent potential. It carries the ability to expel, if only for a time, all worldly discrepancies. When young Boris listens to the Gypsy musicians who are in town he notices that one of them has a violin, the strings of which are “like silver electricity lines arching between pylons” (184). This poetic resemblance between the silvery strings and electric wires conveys the formidable properties of music. Music runs like an electric current through connective ties and supplies a surge of energy wherever it is released. Boris embodies a potent combination of his father’s fearless resolve and his mother’s capacity for artistic transcendence.

Boris develops his unique sound in the vacuum of his abandoned town, making “his own tunes and styles, angling his mind askew to the world” (190). Paradoxically, though his “improvisations” (190) grow out of a void, an empty ghost town, he retains an intuitive link to “the world” outside. He possesses an omniscient quality that enables him to deliberately angle his mind “askew to the world”: Boris’ music is revolutionary, purposely ‘out of line’.

Thus, Irakli, tells Boris about an imaginative vision he had when he first heard Boris play:

‘I saw joyful barbarians dancing through a stormed palace. They were hanging up their flags. They were running through the priceless rooms throwing cigarettes on the carpets and posing for photos in gold bathtubs. Chandeliers were smashed on the ground, and they were stashing paintings in suitcases. They were inventing

ministries for themselves, and choosing imperial bedrooms for their offices. It was wonderful and terrifying.’ (285)

It is a revolution that Irakli sees played out in his mind. With its priceless rooms, expensive carpets, and golden tubs the palace is recognisably aristocratic, an emblem of systemic sovereignty. Irakli envisions the usurpation of this monarchic palace by a subversive “barbarian” force. The term ‘barbarian’ accentuates a feral nature wholly at odds with the polished rooms of the imperial palace. In Irakli’s vision, barbarians litter cigarettes on carpets, smash chandeliers, and pose for the camera that records their acts of sedition. Their rampage is a deliberate and physical performance of mocking disrespect for the order that is dismantled; the hanging of the barbarian flag the ultimate sign of their conquest. The scene exudes a liberating atmosphere. Authoritarian rule is transformed into a playful disorder wherein “imperial bedrooms” are converted into “offices” and barbarians “dance” wildly through the corridors of power. Yet, the event is not only “wonderful”, but also “terrifying” in its devastation. Boris’ music envisions the ascendancy of an uncontrollable grassroots sovereignty, and it speaks to Irakli of collapsing societal order. It evokes at once the thrill of newness and the terror of chaos and is thus the revolutionary moment incarnate.

Boris’ music conjures up potent images and incites violent emotions in the minds of his listeners. It spawns visions of alternative worlds and therefore contains a revolutionary power in and of itself. Thus, Plastic Munari feels its “elastic energy” when he first hears Boris play; his “senses are sharpened”; and “some nameless gratitude has descended upon him” (154). Clearly, the listener of Boris’ music experiences an almost spiritual awakening and enters a heightened state of mind. The world comes into sharp focus, is experienced more fully through an intensified sensory response. Irakli, too, describes this sense of musical revival: “*Beautiful beautiful beautiful I am speechless before your song/Liquid is flowing again in the dry conduits*” (281). His comparison of Boris’ music to a current that fills up arid channels attests to its life-giving force. It posits Boris as a character who magically breathes new life into the otherwise fossilised city of New York.

Boris spellbinds his audience like an archetypal Piper. The energy of insurrection in his music is contagious. It is transmitted to his audience that “unfurls euphorically” when it hears his “musical prophesies” (323) and it “will rip down the building, it will howl and fornicate” (281):

Boris shone as he played, and all the people in that room were filled with new kinds of desire. They wanted to follow him through his hole in the sky. They tugged at him with infantile dependence. They coveted the perfection of his body's sway. They applauded him, reached out their hands, and sucked at him with clammy eyes. They became wet with their own saliva: for he was unattainable, and his absence crept into their mouths. They understood the cannibal's dream. (279-281)

Boris glows on stage, as if haloed by an inner light, and "his hole in the sky" suggests that he has a direct connection with divine powers. The "perfection" of his body as he moves with a hypnotic "sway" adds to his godlike appearance. In comparison to Boris' superhuman presence, the drooling and "infantile" audience is primitive and animalistic. They have surrendered to a feral desire to consume the gifted artist like cannibals and thereby to obtain his supernal powers. The extent of their desire approximates addiction, a state of mind that drains the addict of agency and leaves him out of control. The audience is suggestively "sitting under Boris' feet" (279). They are literally 'underfoot', completely under Boris' spell and at his mercy.

In spite of Boris' divine genius and prophetic powers, Universal sees him as "just a Bulgarian peasant" (305) and the journalists in New York portray him patronisingly as "a feral child" (283). To his metropolitan audience he is a primitive and childlike character who, transported from the Bulgarian province to the metropolitan centre of global civilisation in New York, is in dire need of guidance. Before Boris' first concert, Plastic explains about Boris' origins to the expectant audience: "He grew crops and raised pigs – he made candles from pig lard to light his house, for God's sake. When he came here [to New York] he didn't know – you know – *anything*. He's just a pure natural fucking genius" (277). Plastic profiles Boris as a 'natural' genius, that is, as uncivilized, or indeed as a barbarian. His assumption that Boris doesn't know "*anything*" is a glaring contrast to Boris' in fact omniscient and intuitive understanding of "the world". Due to Boris' rural upbringing and minimal way of life in Bulgaira, Plastic mistakes him for a residue of a quaint past, an anachronistic and therefore exotic figure who can be added to his collection of antiques. Plastic believes that Boris is untouched by the corrupting influences of civilisation and so, to Plastic, Boris represents a tangible link to a primordial, authentic state that has been lost in the modern metropolis.

Plastic does not consider that Boris' origins are futuristic and insightful, rather than backward and uninformed.

Plastic's keen collector's interest extends beyond the careful design of his majestic office. It also influences his selection of artists for his musical productions:

Plastic was known in the industry for the originality of his ear. Back when no one had thought of it, he had found big audiences for klezmer music and remixed Arab devotional chants for New York bars. He had turned small-time Pakistani qawwali singers and Cuban *son* pianists into some of the biggest recording properties in the world. (247)

Plastic's musical acquisitions include genres from around the globe. Listed in the manner above, as exotic "properties", they appear as though they are accumulated items in a collector's catalogue. Plastic adapts culturally specific music to accommodate a global market. Thus, klezmer music, traditionally played at weddings and other private celebrations, is modified for "big audiences". "[D]evotional chants" of deep spiritual significance are 're-mixed' into secular lounge music. While keeping their distinct sound, these musical forms are in this fashion severed from their original context and meaning and turned into Universal's "recording properties" which can be endlessly reproduced. Universal transforms music from a living and dynamic practice into a manageable commodity in the same way that communist rule in 'Life' transforms the innovative potential of chemistry into a soulless industrial production.

Plastic's "influence goes beyond music": "It's an aesthetic *attitude* to globalisation" (278). He is therefore emblematic not just of the global music industry, but of a more general strategy of how to deal in and with globalisation itself. In his "aesthetic attitude", Plastic personifies a regulatory approach that seeks to control and guide global contagion so as to serve specific corporate agendas. During his collaboration with Boris to make his album entitled "*The Delight of the Barbarians*" (303), Boris notes with some admiration that "Plastic knows how to *finish* things: to push and polish until they slot into perfection" (293). Plastic is preoccupied with producing commodities of "perfection" authorised by his finishing touch. He believes 'his' artists to possess a raw potential that, when honed under his guidance, can create spectacular music in a re-mixed form suitable for a global audience. He is Marcuse's globalism personified, equating globalisation with a process of systemic Westernisation.

Inside Boris' album, there is a photograph of Boris "in black and white, sitting with his violin on a desolate mountainside against a thunderous sky" (303). At first glance, the photograph presents Boris as the very picture of untamed nature, mirrored in the primeval landscape and the ominously "thunderous sky". Printed in black and white, the photograph invokes a romanticised past before the invention of colour photography, accentuating the feel of a technologically backward and therefore primitive setting. These wild origins of Boris' music are determined and authenticated by a descriptive caption that reads "*Genius of the Balkans*" (303). The carefully staged photograph points to a paradox: In order to market Boris' album as 'world music', a supposedly global genre, Universal promotes him as essentially Balkan; that is, as a locally and ethnically determined identity.

Plastic muses: He "could not think of a single fact he knew about Bulgaria. He had a vague sense that it wasn't much fun to live there" (249). The promotion of Boris' 'authentically' Balkan music is, then, but an outsider's uninformed fantasy about an obscure, exotic periphery. Instead of reflecting a global outlook, the photograph iterates Plastic's outmoded, essentialist outlook which sees the world in binary terms of civilised/barbarian, globalised/un-globalised, self/other.

However, the fact that the photograph is shot "in Colorado" (303) and not in Bulgaria topples its essentialist imagery. Plastic's intended marketing strategy is thwarted when the informed viewer recognises that the symbolically primitive landscape against which Boris figures is, in fact, American. The picture does not, in reality, capture the barbarian artist in his natural environment, spatially positioned at the primitive, 'unglobalised' periphery of a metropolitan, 'globalised' centre. Rather, it presents Boris as an imported artist who enters a primitive, lifeless American environment. The primeval American landscape iterates the imagery of New York as an ichthyosaur, suggesting that the global superpower that is the United States is actually an antiquated power compared to Boris' prophetic genius.

Like the picture on the cover of Boris' album, its title, *The Delight of the Barbarians*, also carries an important meaning. The title invokes Irakli's description of Boris' music as a revolutionary force, the barbarians' storming of the palace. It presents Boris as the 'barbarian' artist who infiltrates Universal's 'majestic' offices, dismantling their regulatory, corporate power with his transcendent music.

Boris breaches his Universal contract by playing “unscheduled concerts” and making “unauthorised recordings” (306). His music is “[a]vailable for download on the internet” (305); as a frustrated Universal CEO complains: “[*W*]e *don’t own his music* [...] It floats free, in some very cool post-industrial sort of way, and all the lawsuits in the world are not going to bring it back” (306). Universal planned to ‘brand’ Boris as one of its world music artist and to transform his music into their recording property, a commodity to be sold at enormous profit to the company. However, by releasing his music freely into the world, Boris initiates a process of virulent musical contagion because his music has global appeal. Once its electrifying, inspirational energy is emitted into the global network, even the “the biggest music company in the world” (271) cannot regulate or stem its flow. Surprisingly, by relinquishing all formalised claims to his own compositions, Boris retains the power of decision over their global spread. The contagion of his music is not, as Universal would have it, restricted to a manageable commercial market of ‘world music’. It “floats free” through unauthorised circuits. Plastic wonders “whether his genius musician had taken him for a ride” (307). Boris appropriates Plastic’s power of the music industry: He uses Universal’s commercial superpowers for his own purposes while effectively preventing the corporation from asserting ownership of his music. Boris personifies a kind of globalisation that is inherently different from Plastic’s regulatory global branding. He is the global imagination unleashed, the impact and direction of which is unpredictable and uncontrollable.

Boris is exceedingly difficult to locate. He seems to be present in every part of the globe simultaneously. Thus, he is “playing in Montreal and Seattle. He was in Madrid and Berlin. He played in Moscow and Vienna” (302). This depiction recounts Boris’ movements as a series of rapid teleportations between disparate locations. With no further indication as to his means of transport or the time that passes between his multiple arrivals and departures, Boris seemingly possess the mysterious ability to appear anywhere in the world by will. His movements and activities are prompt and unpredictable. They mirror the improvisational quality that also informs his music.

Bruce King has argued that *Solo* “assume[s] that the artist is less likely to be morally corrupt than those in business” (King, 2010, p. 221). King thus reads Boris in heroic terms. However, I propose a more ambiguous reading of Boris and of his revolutionary music, which, as we

have seen, is not only exhilarating, but also terrifying. The newspapers write about Boris' "getting kicked out of restaurants, and beaten up by angry film stars"; "about the drugs he took"; "and his excessive sexual tastes" (326). The stories talk of repeated scandals and fights, they uncover Boris' wild, even barbaric, behaviour. Relatedly, Irakli notices that on a particular occasion, Boris "is wearing sunglasses to cover up a black eye" (330); yet another indicator of his unruly and disruptive conduct. Such depictions of Boris destabilise a straightforward reading of him as a champion of celebrative grassroots globalisation whose creative energy overturns comparably evil corporate empires. A CEO at Universal compares Boris to one of the archetypal villains of traditional folktale when he says that "'Boris is the Pied Piper, leading us all into the shit'" (344). Like the Pied Piper, Boris possesses a superhuman and dangerously seductive power that influences his listeners. He incorporates debased, as well as divine, characteristics and shifts perpetually between the conflicting aspects of a descended god and a feral barbarian.

Khatuna is born in 1982 to "a prominent young party member" and his wife who "claims descent from one of Georgia's ancient royal families" (195). Whereas Boris emerges from a provincial context, Khatuna grows up as a child of the metropolitan elite in Tbilisi. The period is one of political uncertainty: Leonid Brezhnev, the Commander of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, is dying, and communism is falling. Khatuna's mother observes the shift "with excitement" (195). The impending pandemonium that results from the collapsing social order "arouses her interest" and she "delight[s]" in the "romance of chaos" (196). Albeit highly disruptive, chaos is also 'romantic' in that it contains the "spirit and excess" of newness (ibid.). The breakdown of societal and political systems becomes a surge of renewed energy that makes "her spirit rise" (196). These chaotic energies rouse a strong sexual desire in the Princess on the night of Khatuna's conception:

She does not even like to make love to this man who is so unromantic in his soul but now, now! she pulls it from him and he is drunk, lost to it, holding the back of the seat [of the limousine] fucking on cobbled streets and they are turning corners driver grabbing mirror glances she deep in herself [...] things turn breathing matter circumference driving axis she sees houses shapes depth out of the window they are reaching home now, now! [...] Nine months later, the woman gave birth to a baby girl, and named her Khatuna. (197)

The sex is described as “fucking” rather than lovemaking. The Princess is “deep in herself”, preoccupied with her own desire more so than with her husband who, nameless and anonymous, is a mere tool to satiate her need. This scene of an impulsive sexual encounter in the back of a taxi iterates a pornographic theme and emphasises the act as an unromantic, mindless copulating, initiated not by affection, but by a built-up energy in need of immediate release. It is not a romance of love, but indeed of chaos.

The world speeds up outside the car windows and, as the car moves through Tbilisi, turning corners and axis, the world deliquesces, its dizzying liquefaction accentuated by a complete collapse of linguistic syntax. Jade Colbert observes that “the physical environment seemed very solid in the very beginning [of *Solo*] and less solid, kind of coming to ruin, dissolving as the story progressed” (Colbert, 2012). This trope, Colbert notes, “put [her] in mind of that line from the *Communist Manifesto*: ‘All that is solid melts into air’” (ibid.). The line recalls Marx’ understanding that capitalism translates everything terms of exchange value, wherefore all becomes the liquidity of capital. The dissolution of the physical environment in *Solo* does indeed convey the advent of a new order governed by liquid capital.

Khatuna is conceived in this climatic moment when communism gives way to capitalism. It is a moment when the solidity of the existing order liquefies and is supplanted by a new reality. This reality is formed not on affectionate, humanitarian values, but on unsentimental principles of financialization. Accordingly, Khatuna’s conception is a mythical origin story about the formation of the new capitalist ‘order’ that she personifies which is at once destructive and liberating.

Like her mother, Khatuna has a yearning for excess. She pursues an “extravagant” life which will enable her “to travel all over the world”, “have a big house, and another for [her] brother, too”; she will “drive a Mercedes” and wear “big diamonds on [her] finger” (203). The life to which she aspires is that of the privileged global elite. She wants the unlimited freedom of movement that comes with economic opulence. However, wealth is not sufficient in its own right; it must be flaunted through consumerist symbols of affluence. Khatuna “always see[s] hidden meaning in things” (215). She ascribes a profound significance to what is, in fact, but lifeless, material objects. Accordingly, Khatuna looks remarkably like Deckard’s diagnosis of globalisation as the spread of neo-liberal capitalism, the driving force of which is a never-ending accumulation of wealth (Deckard, 2012).

Khatuna is a princess by way of her maternal lineage, and therefore belongs at the top of a feudal hierarchy, the power of which is passed down and solidified through aristocratic bloodlines. However, this heritage has no impact on her lived reality. It is but “a secret her mother had told her” (198). Clearly, traditional power structures have collapsed and Khatuna must find alternative ways to fulfil her dream of unlimited wealth. She realises her dream through a determined career “in business” where it is possible to make “loads of money” (207). In the realm of Ulrich’s daydreams, the business tycoons of the present have supplanted the aristocratic elites of the past as the social class that lays claim to superior entitlement and privilege.

This development manifests for example in the architectural design of the “futuristic Georgian castle” (231) that Khatuna constructs for Kakha:

‘The building is totally new. We pulled down the old fort and saved the bricks. We built the most advanced security installation in Georgia, then we put the medieval bricks on the facade so it looks like it always did.’ [...] The outer wall was a sweeping semicircular window as if for traffic control, and there, spread out below, was the entire city (208-210)

The castle blends medieval architecture and modern technology. A remnant from a feudal past, the elevated castle represents a tiered order. It epitomises the supreme power and control of the nobility over their lands and their serfs. Like royalty, Khatuna and Kakha oversee their surrounding lands from their castle. Indeed, Kakha notes that he is “standing in his castle looking down on all the peasants” (211). The resemblance of these new gangster- and business overlords with an old, feudal aristocracy suggests that the emergent order they represent is no less hierarchical or oppressive than previous forms of social organisation. The interior of Khatuna’s castle testifies to a level of financial excess that rivals the riches of royalty: It is luxuriously adorned with a “marble floor”, “chandelier[s]”, and “gold walls” (ibid.). It includes also a “reception room” (ibid.), which calls to mind a majestic audience hall. The new order that has usurped the old is not, as Ulrich’s father envisioned, governed by egalitarian ideals. It is intrinsically divisive and hierarchical: Power and privilege is inextricably bound up with economic superiority. Kakha and Khatuna have a panoramic outlook of Tbilisi from their castle. This distanced perspective facilitates “traffic control” and enables their management of movement into and out of the city. Thus, *Solo* transforms the

business elite into aristocracy through the symbolical language of romance, conveying their status as the supreme rulers of contemporary metropolitan life.

Khatuna and Kakha have “the most advanced private army on the continent” (259). Their wealth affords them access to an ominous global market that supplies them with the immense military strength needed to solidify their control of the region. They have “a shipment of Rottweilers arriving [...] from Russia” (208), “rocket launchers”, “missiles, and “top-class [military] instructors from South Africa and England” (259). Accordingly, while the medieval castle attests to a lingering influence of residual forms of social inequality, it is the new addition of technologies and networks characteristic of hypermodernity that facilitate their perpetuation. The process of industrialisation that Ulrich’s father believed would engender a peaceful and cosmopolitan world has instead fed a culture of violence. Technological development has spun out of control. It has manufactured a rising number of risks, including the risk of high-tech warfare.

Khatuna’s private army offers protection and attests to her strong need for security. She feels that “[t]he only way to survive is to be afraid” (231). In her single-minded obsession with accumulating financial excess and power, Khatuna embodies the forces of global capital which rely on a continuous evaluation of risk that borders on paranoia. She worries about “dangers that lurked in crowds” (254) and “build[s] defences so formidable that nothing [can] ever come close” (255). Khatuna reflects the qualities that Ulrich Beck ascribes to what he terms the ‘world risk society’ (Beck, 2009). Beck argues that “[i]ncalculable risks and manufactured uncertainties resulting from the triumphs of modernity mark the *conditio humana* at the beginning of the 21st century” (Beck, 2009, p. 6). The increased knowledge and control facilitated by recent technological developments have engendered a growing awareness of “*anticipated catastrophe, potential danger*” (Beck, 2008, p. 4). This world risk society is oriented towards the future, attempting to predict catastrophes and thereby to prevent their repercussions. However, when taken too far, this caution turns into paranoia: “[A]ll possible, to a greater or lesser degree improbable scenarios must be taken into consideration; to knowledge drawn from experience and science, we must add imagination, suspicion, fiction and fear” (Beck, 2008, pp. 6-7). Certainly, Khatuna embodies a global capital absorbed by risk evaluations and security concerns, ever preoccupied with safeguarding the continuous accumulation of wealth through a militant sovereignty.

Struction Enterprises, Inc. in New York, lead by Khatuna, has a suggestive slogan: “*Building the twenty-first century*” (232). The slogan considers design and construction in metaphorical terms. It presents Struction not merely as a firm responsible for the physical construction of modern buildings, but also as a central ‘contractor’ of the contemporary world order. Their creations are designed according to corporate ideals of efficiency and security to ensure the continued rule and safety of the business elite:

‘This is one of the blocks we’re developing,’ she says. ‘We’re going to pull down the whole thing and convert it into high-security housing for high-end individuals.’ [...] Businessmen need a secure environment [...] So we’re pulling this whole area down, we’re making a private road with barricades. It will be a totally secure block, as good as you can find in any modern city.’ (320)

Khatuna’s new order currently under construction solidifies social discrepancies. She creates a city divided into ghettos, thus ensuring that “businessmen”, the new ruling class, can live in complete seclusion from the surrounding world. Their private domain accommodates only “high-end individuals”. The term ‘high-end’ has a significant double meaning. It refers to the position of the business elite at the top of social hierarchies, but it also reflects a suggestive retail terminology. The term considers human beings as commodities which can be classified with reference to the opposing categories ‘worthy’ and ‘worthless’. As Khatuna physically sets herself apart from the crowds to avoid unknown dangers, her perspective turns increasingly detached, semblant of “a surveillance satellite, with eyes that had no feeling” (261). Her mind is “strangely void”; (204), she is “coldly focused” (265) and “cynical” (294). Khatuna’s ‘inhuman’ world-view is limited to a perpetual screening for potential threats to the accumulation of capital. As all is translated in terms of financialization, people are reduced to objects, the value of which is contingent upon their financial, and by extension social status.

In this new order of the twenty-first century, “the ‘binary coding’ – permitted or forbidden, legal or illegal, right or wrong, us and them – does not exist” (Beck, 2009, p. 3). Within “the horizon of risk, people are not good or evil but only more or less risky” (ibid.). To Khatuna’s mind, those who do not belong to the ‘high-end’ of the social order put the ‘business-world’ at risk. The separationist urban layout in Khatuna’s restructured New York carries a strong resemblance to her own medieval Georgian castle in Tbilisi. She transports, in this sense, the chaotic disorder of the global ‘periphery’ to the ‘core’ in New York. Here her militant capitalism demolishes and supplants existing structures and, in doing so, obscures

globalist distinctions between First and Third Worlds, territorial power centres and their margins.

Khatuna is manipulative and commanding. “Girls followed [her] at school” (202) like a royal entourage of ladies in waiting, and Khatuna “led bands of youths to late-night bars” (203). Judging by her many followers she has a natural instinct for leadership. She is also “attractive and flirtatious” (204); she looks “like a model” (228); and wields a magnetic, seductive power akin to that of Boris’ entrancing music. Indeed, Khatuna can make men “fall in love with her *like that*” (231). She can manipulate and ensnare people around her as if by a mere extension of her will. She uses this ability strategically and with extraordinary success in the world of business where she advances rapidly from the position of an uneducated seller of cigarettes outside nightclubs in Georgia to the position of Kakha’s right-hand woman:

‘Would you like to improve your life, Mr Sabadze?’ He stopped. ‘My life is already perfect. What can you offer?’ ‘Marlboro. Best cigarette in the world [...] Look into my eyes. The moon is full tonight, and you have met a beautiful Georgian woman. Wouldn’t you like to remember how it feels? Smoke one of these world-famous cigarettes and you can inhale this moment so it will never go away. It will stay with you and keep you young [...] He took a business card from his pocket. [...] ‘here’s my card. You can call me and we’ll talk.’ (205-206)

Khatuna’s offer stops Kakha in his tracks. She compels him to look deep into her eyes, as though hypnotising him. By calling his attention to the “full moon” and to her own beauty, she conjures up a romantic and mystical ambience that she links to the cigarette. The cigarette is converted through Khatuna’s skilled advertising from a health hazard to a desirable and almost magical item, the smoke of which can augment happiness and generate eternal youth.

In a similar fashion, as the “head of security systems” at Struction Enterprises, Inc. Khatuna sells military equipment in a seductive discourse of “breezy militarism” (275). She casts the pain and chaos of war in an easy and cheerful light. While Ulrich’s father’s reverie in ‘Life’ considers militarism emblematic of a crude and violent past, subjected to Khatuna’s clever marketing strategies it becomes “not retrograde but futuristic – and even profound” (ibid.). Thus, whereas Boris’ distinguishing characteristic was a prophetic, artistic genius, Khatuna has a natural talent for business and marketing. She is capable of turning even the

most deadly merchandise into an object of desire. She is the seductive and compelling power of global capital incarnate.

Boris shows surprising resistance to Khatuna's otherwise all-encompassing influence. When she suggestively offers that the two of them might "find somewhere to be alone", Boris refuses. Once she discovers that he is immune to her power of persuasion, her "instinct tells her Boris is trying to sabotage her life at its very core" (319). A personification of a paranoid capitalist order, all that cannot be subsumed under Khatuna's control poses a potential risk. As we have seen, Boris personifies the artistic, global imagination which is potentially limitless. It transcends all geographical and conceptual borders. It repudiates any systemic order. Consequently, though Boris and Khatuna both personify revolutionary forces of globalisation, they are, in fact, each others' opposites, one abstract and free-floating, the other material(ist) and controlling.

Khatuna decides to eliminate her nemesis, but understands that the New York context demands a different tact than the private gangster armies and assassinations of Tbilisi. She knows that "[i]n America, strength [lies] with the government, and if you want to destroy someone you [have] to get the government to do it" (323). Khatuna does not regard the government as an institution that upholds law and order. Rather, she uses it as an instrument to realise her own personal vendetta against Boris, an act that attests to her intricate knowledge and mastery of the American system. She collects "information about Boris", including "[a]nything that can be made to *look* suspicious" (ibid.), and presents it to the FBI. She thus manipulates the FBI by spinning fiction into fact, staging the many "stories" which are circulating about Boris as objective "information". When she first arrives in New York, her new colleagues at Struction Enterprises Inc., condescendingly believe her to be "just a Third World girl"(266) who is ignorant of the ways of the world. Here, however, she is a force to be reckoned with as she effortlessly outsmarts the global 'centre' of power. Indeed, she mockingly notes about the FBI that, "[t]hose guys aren't very complex, I know how to get inside their heads" (342). Through a conscious exertion of her will and seductive powers, Khatuna turns the FBI into her private security force that blindly serves her quest to eliminate Boris who constitutes the single remaining threat to her supreme control.

Whereas Boris and Khatuna throw themselves into the force field of the global hub that is New York and take advantage of the opportunities that arise, Irakli “harbour[s] an unhappiness about reality” (217). “Reality”, it seems to him, is “nothing more than a series of improbable accidents” (216). He sees history as a series of ‘accidents’, a process of development gone tragically wrong. Therein, like Ulrich at the beginning of ‘Life’, Irakli comes to reflect modernity’s disenchantment with its own narrative of ongoing progress, as theorised by Beck. There are several such links between Ulrich in ‘Life’ and Irakli. For example, in ‘Life’ Ulrich is consumed by his inner world of memories which are compared to “submarine monsters” (85). In ‘Daydreams’, Irakli is also consumed by his inner life. He “lives among visions” and “under their influence [he] hears the postponed echo of ancient sea monsters” (294). It is as if Irakli comes to life as a personification of Ulrich’s past and melancholic memories.

Boris and Khatuna thrive on the revolutionary energies of chaos that arise from ‘discontinuous change’ into the new world order that Ulrich envisions in his daydreams. They embrace the future as they pursue their goals; Boris strives towards fame and Khatuna looks to further her fortune. Both materially manifest their desires. Irakli, on the other hand, has a more ephemeral and spiritual ambition. He mourns the loss of “something else, deeper and prior” to which, he feels, the world “ha[s] to return” (ibid.). He searches for “a truer place” and he writes poetry about “feelings [which have been] forgotten” (221). His poetry revolves around a lament of the loss of a supposedly virtuous past, and he envisions the new twenty-first century as a comparably cynical, ‘unfeeling’ era. Like Boris and Khatuna, he discharges a particular energy in excess. However, whereas Boris and Khatuna’s energies are innovative, Irakli’s energy is “despondent” (295). He is fixated on “the horrors of the world” (317). Khatuna and Boris are involved with the powerful elites, but Irakli seeks out the poor and the homeless who become his close “friends” (220). Irakli lives ascetically, like them, and as a vagrant. In contrast to Boris’ and Khatuna’s cynical individualism, then, Irakli practices a sentimental solidarity and he “pay[s] little attention to his body, or his food” (217). Wholly unconcerned with material things, he becomes “thin and scruffy” (ibid.).

Thus, while at the end of *Solo* Boris “has become formidable” (296) and Khatuna “has become volatile” (348), each increasing in power and strength, Irakli has conversely diminished. His “skin is peeling off”; he “can’t write” (331); and he feels that he is “becoming transparent” (220). He does not manifest his artistic talent into the world. It is self-

contained and engenders only melancholic inward “visions”. Accordingly, Irakli’s impossible attempt to resuscitate a utopian past, to return to a ‘truer place’, is an intrinsically unproductive endeavour. Though he travels always with Khatuna and is Boris’ close friend, he appears to be merely a secondary character in ‘Daydreams’, for whereas the other characters initiate action and drive the plot progression onward, Irakli’s despondent energy produces only inaction and lethargy.

Notably, Irakli thinks of his sister Khatuna as “another part of himself, carelessly separated before birth” (198). Khatuna “love[s] him” (198), in her turn, and when he dies she mourns the devastating loss of “the one thing [she] *couldn’t lose*” (341). Brother and sister are closely connected and yet essentially separate. If Khatuna is a personification of ‘inhuman’ global capital, then Irakli personifies a contrasting perspective of sentimental solidarity and equal opportunity. He embodies a humanitarian ideal that has become detached from global capital in its current form. When Irakli dies, therefore, Khatuna loses her other half, her humanity. In metaphorical terms, the sibling connection between Irakli and Khatuna conveys how, without the balancing principles of solidarity and humanism, the forces of global capital turn dangerously cynical. Certainly, after Irakli’s death, Khatuna’s dangerous, militant energy swells and she longs to “see a city at war” (342). She leaves New York for Baghdad, conceivably on the hunt for the ultimate upsurge of excess power and chaos or, indeed, a new business opportunity. Yet, humanism without an active engagement with the forces of capitalism which, for better or for worse, constitute a significant driving force of innovation in Ulrich’s contemporary moment, becomes but an abstract, irrealist ideal, diminishing in power and potency.

It is no insignificant point that Ulrich ‘kills off’ Irakli’s despondent energy in his daydreams. Through Irakli’s suicide, Ulrich symbolically lets go of that part of himself which was consumed by an unproductive search for a fictitious wholeness and ‘deeper’ meaning. He contrastingly envisions the journeys of Boris and Khatuna as open-ended, thus orienting himself towards the future potential that he sees in their global energies of music and criminality.

Ronald James Rieve reads *Solo* as “a parable of the Bulgarian experience of the grand narrative of modernity”, evocative of “the loss of legitimacy of the meta-narratives” that informed Bulgarian nation-building during the 20th century (Rieve, 2011, p. 18). Maya

Kòvskaya, similarly sees Ulrich's life as "a grounded metonym for the vicissitudes of the 20th century" experienced from Bulgaria (Kòvskaya, 2010, p. 1). I, too, consider Ulrich a personification of a broader narrative of societal change. However, I draw short of reducing Ulrich to a metonym of the Bulgarian nation. 'Life' is not merely the narrative of fraught nation building, but a much wider story about the global ramifications of modernisation and further, that Ulrich personifies what Beck terms 'reflexive modernity', or a "second modernity in the making" (Beck, 2008, p. 2)³⁴. At this moment in time, Beck argues, modernity has become "reflexive", is taking stock of its own "rush to development" (Beck, 2008, p. 3). This reflexive modernity comprises an awareness of the instability and disruption, the 'discontinuous change', caused by modernization processes to traditional structures. Modernisation thereby becomes not a herald of 'progress', but of fragmentation and, potentially, of crisis. Relatedly, Dasgupta comments that *Solo* explores "the impact on the self of having to live through successive demolition of political regimes, where you have to pick yourself up, remake yourself, speak a new language, act under new rules, where the continuity of yourself is cut into pieces" (Dasgupta, 2009b, p. 71). Ulrich's outlook in *Solo* reifies this toppling of the Grand Narrative of modernity. Ulrich reflects on his life and finds that "[f]orty or fifty years [...] were enough for a modern life, for the human frame could not hold up if the world was destroyed too many times and made again" (164). After a century of upheaval, both societal and personal, Ulrich can no longer "tell what kind of world he was living in" (161). He is alienated from his environment; confused by the long history he carries of continual restructuration. He feels that he is "living in the aftertimes, whose rules he [does] not understand" (164). Rather than providing a sense of comprehensibility, then, Ulrich's panoramic perspective initially operates like a distorting lens: In its seemingly boundless scope, his outlook renders navigation near impossible, because what it reveals is an unending process of personal and societal fragmentation. For Ulrich, the immense timeframe of his life is a source not of clarity, but of disorientation. The turbulence of the 20th century World history, and of Ulrich's personal history as well, creates an "environment [...] hostile to the laying down of memories" (118). It thwarts any attempt to construct a linear (life) narrative and a unifying vision of unbroken (personal) development. Ulrich cannot construct continuity from what is, in reality, a history of dissolution. Nonetheless, his final recognition of his

³⁴ See also Beck, Ulrich, Giddens, Anthony, Lash, Scott: *Reflexive Modernization. Politics, Tradition and Aesthetics in the Modern Social Order* (1994).

shattered inheritance incorporates the possibility for redemption: Ulrich abandons the impossible quest for wholeness in order to adopt instead a different narrative, one that epitomises Beck's model of 'discontinuous change'. This new perspective admits and reflects upon the history of failure. Yet, Ulrich does not, in the end, dwell melancholically on the fiction of greatness that was lost. He embraces instead the aptitude for epochal change inherent in that history, which gives rise to the new potentials he explores in his daydreams.

Boris and Khatuna are the heroes of 'Daydreams' not by way of a virtuous nature, as it is otherwise argued by King, but because they are the central characters around whom the story evolves. They are heroes in the mythical sense: "Through the centre of the tale moves the character of the hero [...] Whether or not we find him admirable or magnificent, he is the 'hero' simply because he is the unifying focus to whom the other parts belong" (Birenbaum, 1988, p. 79). Boris and Khatuna are archetypal Trickster figures. The Trickster in mythic narratives is someone who "eludes moral classification" and "seems to represent a basic resistance to society's laws and niceties" (Birenbaum, 1988, p. 89). Neither Boris nor Khatuna can be categorised in binary terms of good or evil, 'heroes' or villains. They are undecidable, their motives obscure.

Dasgupta has commented that *Solo* grows out of a "tragic optimism" which "is not to say that the future is good or bad, [...] but that the future *is*, and the ability of human beings to carry on inventing is something that for good or bad is always with us" (Dasgupta, 2012). Certainly, Boris and Khatuna –global creativity and global capital incarnate– manifest two primal energies, the magnetic attraction and uncontainable potential of which resists ideological and moral judgement. The revolutionary forces they personify differ particularly in this aspect from the revolutions in 'Life'. They arise out of chaos and further societal upheaval. They do not work towards a particular ideological agenda or an overarching structural order, but are instead single-mindedly focused on fulfilling their private aspirations and desires. Thus, whereas the revolutions in 'Life' were systemically controlled, Boris and Khatuna's revolutions in 'Daydreams' spread in a haphazard manner wherever they appear and exert their influence. The difference is a significant one: The former imposes and sustains artificially a particular order of rule; the latter grows organically out of an already existing condition, making strategic use of opportunities and connections that arise on a local and situational level. Whereas Ulrich's 20th century narrative is informed by a quest for order and

scientific ‘progress’, Ulrich’s 21st century narrative is informed by an embrace of chaos and by the liquefying potential of global flows that reverts any such quest for absolutes.

3. The Close-Up. Globalisation and the Loss of Community in Caryl Phillips' *A Distant Shore* and *In the Falling Snow*.

In the preceding chapter we have seen that Rana Dasgupta's *Tokyo Cancelled* and *Solo* are characterised by a panoramic approach to representing globalisation. We have established that, by coupling a topical focus on expansive networks with specific generic and narrative strategies, Dasgupta produces a zooming-out effect that facilitates his imaginative formations of literary topologies of globalisation.

I proceed now to examine two of Caryl Phillips' novels, *A Distant Shore* and *In the Falling Snow*, as representative of a converse close-up approach. In this chapter, I demonstrate how Phillips employs thematic and formal techniques that generate a zooming-in effect and enable his conception of what may be described as literary phenomenologies of globalisation. Accordingly, whereas chapter two was centred on literary representations of globalisation on a macro level, chapter three engages with globalisation on a micro level.

Chapter two begins with a general consideration of the panoramic perspective and of its application in my analysis of Dasgupta's works. In a similar manner, before turning to the specific readings of Phillips' *A Distant Shore* and *In the Falling Snow* in this chapter, I provide first a consideration of the close-up perspective.

When photography was invented in 1839, the medium was seized upon with fervour by naturalists who sought to capture that which their microscopes had long revealed, but never fixed. In a monthly publication of micrographs entitled *The Wonders of the Microscope Photographically Revealed* (1861), William Henry Olley thus praised the ability of the new medium to capture "the wonders of a world hitherto [...] wholly invisible" (qtd. in Dawn Ades, 2008, p. 15). In its most extreme manifestations, the close-up revealed and fixed the subject in atomic detail. The viewer could scrutinise the fundamental structures and configurations of the subject, now rendered conveniently immobile and unchanging within the frame of the photograph.

The close-up simulates proximity between subject and viewer and therefore, as argued by Mary Ann Doane, this particular perspective implies an "intimacy [and] knowledge of interiority" (Doane, 2003, p. 106). Relatedly, in "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction" (1936), Walter Benjamin wrote about the close-up that it reflects a

desire “to bring things ‘closer’ spatially and humanly” (Benjamin, 1999, p. 223). The close-up thus seems to strive towards unveiling the internal logic of the motif and to produce an experience of intensified seeing through the camera lens.

However, the ability of the close-up to reveal what remains unseen by the naked eye also challenges the logic and reliability of human vision. It destabilises the dependability of the human senses to perceive the world exactly ‘as it is’. Consequently, while the close-up incorporates an implicit aspiration to intimately understand the subject, this perspective simultaneously denies the possibility of obtaining such a definitive insight. The enlargement of a single detail cuts off a small section from what is, clearly, a larger though invisible whole. The fragment takes up the entire space of the frame, effectively causing a dissolution of scale by largely omitting spatial and temporal contextualisation. Dawn Ades describes how the close-up “tend[s] to reveal the strangeness of the everyday” because “the absence of any scale makes the reading of the image problematic and intriguing” (Ades, 2008, p. 35). Paradoxically, then, in order to discover the essence of its subject, the close-up produces a concentration of vision that obscures more than it uncovers.

The close-up incorporates a disfiguring or abstracting quality that disorients and confounds. It is subjective vision *par excellence*. It generates a phenomenological experience of presence and yet also transforms the motif into a sign, a surface, a text that must be read and interpreted (Doane, 2003, p. 94). While it discloses the motif in extreme detail, it retains an element of incomprehensibility. The viewer can only imagine the context that is left out of the picture. The close-up contains the dual experiences of proximity and absence; the fragment is intensely experienced, while its context is out of sight.

We recall from chapter two Michel de Certeau’s reflections on the panoramic view of Manhattan as the city looks to the elevated and distant observer. In a similar manner, de Certeau also describes the close-up view of Manhattan as the city is seen by the pedestrian. The pedestrian, de Certeau writes, is immersed in the disorienting multitudes of life in the streets. He is “in the city’s grasp”; “clasped by the streets that turn and return it according to an anonymous law” (de Certeau, 1988 p. 92). The pedestrian is absorbed within the overarching maze of the city, the order of which is obscured by the ever-moving masses and labyrinthine streets. From this perspective, the city is unidentifiable as an entity. It is experienced as a confounding series of sensory impressions and, in effect, attains an almost claustrophobic aspect. Whereas the panoramic outlook afforded the distant observer of the

city a sense of comprehensibility and unity, the close-up perspective of the pedestrian denies such a cohesive vision:

The ordinary practitioners of the city live [...] below the thresholds at which visibility begins [...] they are walkers [...] whose bodies follow the thicks and thins of an urban 'text' they write without being able to read it [...] The networks of these moving, intersecting writings compose a manifold story [...] shaped out of fragments of trajectories and alterations of spaces. (de Certeau, 1988, p. 93)

Seen up close, de Certeau's Manhattan must be 'read' by the pedestrian one block and one impression at a time. The close-up transforms the city into a text and the pedestrian into a reader who must attempt to interpret and thereby to navigate it. It is through the abstract imagination of the pedestrian that the many people and places of the city come together to form a single space. Notably, de Certeau associates the close-up perspective with a *practice* and an *experience* and thus inextricably links this particular perspective to a concrete, phenomenological encounter. The close-up claims an intimacy of vision coupled with an awareness of its own unintelligible position within a wider network. Through its simultaneity of proximity and abstraction, the close-up seems particularly well suited as an approach that may capture globalisation as a lived experience, a cognition of global connectivity filtered through a localised and situated perspective.

The capacity of the close-up to bring things into proximity spatially and humanly; to examine the inner logic of its motif; and, in doing so, to produce an experience of intensified 'seeing' is characteristic also of Phillips' literary technique in *A Distant Shore* and *In the Falling Snow*. In these two novels Phillips interweaves topical and formal strategies so as to represent and examine the dynamics of globalisation 'up close'. *A Distant Shore* and *In the Falling Snow* are thematically centred on the personal struggles of the global subject to navigate in a disorienting environment of bordered communities and multivalent networks. They represent globalisation on a local, even personal, scale as it impacts on the lives of individual characters. Character is the principal vehicle that centres and drives the narrative. Whereas in Dasgupta's fabulous realms characters serve a symbolic function to the narrative, Phillips' works are shaped around character representation through renditions of the inner lives of the protagonists.

In *A Distant Shore* and *In the Falling Snow*, globalisation appears as a subjective experience conveyed to the reader in an idiomatic narrative discourse that presents the thoughts, memories, and feelings of the characters. This discourse is restricted by the emotive states of the characters and is limited by their point of view. It reflects, in other words, a realistic mimesis of consciousness, unfolding for the reader the psychologies of the protagonists. The discourse mimics the continuous vacillation of their thoughts between a remembered past and a yet unmediated present, as well as between states of sleep and wakefulness, dream and reality. It is left up to the reader to fill in the gaps and, through the interpretative search for a coherent plot progression, to piece together a narrative whole from these thought fragments. This psychological realism, however, effectively destabilises narrative coherence and reliability. It zooms in on the subjective, experiencing mind and, in doing so, obscures the ‘big picture’, which must be interpreted and imagined by the reader.

Like the close-up, then, *A Distant Shore* and *In the Falling Snow* ‘cut off’ sections of a larger whole in order to provide a detailed insight into the ‘inner logic’ of their motif; that is, of globalisation as a phenomenological experience. The effect is purposely confounding. On the story level, Phillips’ protagonists struggle to make sense of composite social and cultural networks within which they move. Meanwhile, on the discourse level, the reader is compelled to gradually decode the position of each character within a larger textual framework by reference to narrative fragments. In my succeeding analyses of *A Distant Shore* and *In the Falling Snow* I include a more detailed examination of the specific ways in which Phillips strategically interweaves content and form to arrive at his literary close-ups of globalisation.

Some preliminary remarks are required concerning my readings of *A Distant Shore* and *In the Falling Snow* within the context of Globalisation Studies. Existing critique considers these novels almost exclusively within the context of Postcolonial Studies. My readings therefore signal a significant shift in focus. In advocating this shift, I do not dismiss existing postcolonial analyses of these novels as redundant. Indeed, these analyses identify one of the most dominant characteristics of Phillips’ works, namely their examination of the continuous effects of the European imperial past upon the present. Thus, Bénédicte Ledent and Daria Tunca describe Phillips’ authorship as comprising “an ongoing and subtle exploration of what makes us who we are, and how we came to be that way” (Ledent & Tunca, 2012, p. xii). They consider Phillips’ works as being “deeply fascinated with the past –what Phillips has called

‘the back story’– and how it shapes the present” (ibid.). This looking back is a characteristic approach in existing analyses of *A Distant Shore* and *In the Falling Snow*. These analyses tend to focus on the novels’ engagement with the themes of “identity, exile, or loneliness” as informed by an imperial legacy of bordered identity discourses of “class, gender, or race” (ibid.). Postcolonial reading strategies generate important characterisations of *A Distant Shore* and *In the Falling Snow* as works that problematize hegemonies of national and cultural homogeneity which grew out of modernity and which remain paradoxically prevalent in this era of transnational exchange and mobility.

Yet, I contend that the postcolonial approach accounts for only one aspect of what is, in fact, a more far-reaching literary project. While seeking to describe the “newness” in Phillips’ works, postcolonial analyses remain, in my view, constricted by their retrospective premise (ibid.). As we shall see, *A Distant Shore* and *In the Falling Snow* do more than problematize residual, unserviceable concepts of identity and belonging. They also imagine radical restructurings of what identity and belonging have come mean in a global age. My shift in focus towards Globalisation Studies adds to existing postcolonial critiques of *A Distant Shore* and *In the Falling Snow* a dimension so far inadequately articulated. It facilitates a conception of these two novels as globalisation narratives that envision ways of being-in-the-world which are oriented towards a global present and future, rather than moored in a critique of the colonial past.

3.1. Unhinged. Community and Disengagement in *A Distant Shore*.

A Distant Shore is comprised of five interrelated parts. Part I, III, and V are narrated by Dorothy Jones, a white Englishwoman in her early fifties. Dorothy has recently settled in a small village, Weston, in northern England after early retirement as a music teacher. Part II tells the story of 30-year-old Gabriel, a black man from an unnamed African country. Gabriel is recently arrived in England as an irregular migrant and a refugee from his native country which is wrecked by civil war. He is incarcerated in an English prison, accused of the rape of an English teenage girl, Denise, who he met briefly upon his arrival. Solomon Bartholomew, the narrator of part IV, is a newcomer to the village of Weston like Dorothy. Here he works as a night-watchman. It is gradually revealed to the reader that Solomon is actually Gabriel who has assumed a new name and identity after his release from prison. Dorothy and Solomon are neighbours in Weston and they establish a tentative friendship that comes to a sudden end when Solomon is murdered by local skinheads.

The central plot plays out over a few weeks and revolves around two main events: The meeting between Dorothy and Gabriel/Solomon and Gabriel/Solomon's murder, respectively. The first event brings about hope that the meeting between the two protagonists will alleviate their individual histories of trauma and loneliness. The second event thwarts that same hope and leads to Dorothy's breakdown and institutionalisation. These two events constitute Dorothy and Gabriel/Solomon's transformative encounters with globalisation.

The meeting between the two protagonists has been often described in postcolonial analyses as an 'unlikely' encounter between two essentially different characters; a white Englishwoman and a black African man³⁵. However, I want to suggest that in a globalisation context, theirs is, in fact, becoming an increasingly likely encounter. A case in point are the ways in which the current mass-migrations of migrants and refugees from the Global South to Europe bring otherwise disparate worlds into ever closer proximity. –Not only in spatial terms, but also in the sense that this immense inflow of migrants impels societal restructuration so as to acknowledge and negotiate, if not accommodate, this new reality of global connectivity. *A Distant Shore* asks the reader to imagine a globalised world wherein

³⁵ See for example Ledent 2004, p. 153; Farrier, 2008, p. 407; Ellis, 2013, p.11; Tournay-Theodotou, 2012, p. 295.

such encounters as the one between Dorothy and Gabriel/Solomon, between otherwise disparate parts of the world, are becoming an inescapable reality.

Certainly, the world that Dorothy and Gabriel/Solomon inhabit is informed by global flows of capital, people, and cultures across borders. Gabriel/Solomon sees how the government officials in his country “drove foreign cars” (138) and “travelled freely to Europe and even to the United States” (139). The expensive imported cars and the unrestricted freedom of movement that the officials enjoy are signifiers of a privileged elite whose economic dominance affords them access to global networks of commerce and travel. They look remarkably like the Prince in “The Tailor” or Klaus Kauffman in “The House of the Frankfurt Mapmaker” whose dominance and freedom of movement is also contingent upon financial spending power. Gabriel/Solomon himself, however, has no “identity papers” (124) or financial means by which he might gain access to these networks. And yet, he is not immobilised. Like Deniz, he journeys instead along underground networks migration, and the reader immediately identifies him as a central figure in the global imagination; the irregular migrant and refugee. Furthermore, Dorothy’s observation that “England has changed” runs as a refrain throughout the novel (3, 60). In Dorothy’s England, it is “difficult to tell who’s from around here and who’s not. Who belongs and who’s a stranger” (3). This serves as a potent testament to the fact that the world that is represented in *A Distant Shore* is one wherein national and conceptual boundaries are blurring. The demography of England has changed; it is no longer a postcolonial nation, but a global hub.

Dorothy and Gabriel/Solomon’s environment is thus easily recognisable to the reader as a realistic representation of the contemporary global order where formerly clear-cut national, racial, and cultural distinctions are becoming increasingly obscure and where new hierarchies are emerging which offer restricted access to financial networks of privilege. The convergence of Dorothy’s and Gabriel/Solomon’s trajectories may therefore meaningfully be examined within the context of Phillips’ understanding of the contemporary moment as epitomising “a new world order” where “the colonial, or postcolonial, model has collapsed” and given way to “one global conversation” (Phillips, 2002, p. 5). Whereas postcolonial readings construe the meeting between the racially and culturally different Dorothy and Gabriel/Solomon as an unlikely encounter, a global reading sees this event as representative of “a twenty-first century world” (ibid.) characterised by global movement; a world within which such meetings are gradually becoming both more recurrent and more probable. Theirs

is not a realm divided between European empires and their (post)colonial acquisitions. It is instead a world of converging networks that effectively disrupts distinctions between centres and peripheries, making a continued policing of borders a problematical endeavour indeed.

In the present global age, Phillips writes, “we are all unmoored” and “home is a place riddled with vexing questions” (Phillips, 2002, p.6). Indeed, Dorothy and Gabriel/Solomon are, each in their way, homeless. They are migrants, if migrancy is understood here in the metaphorical sense as a state of being-away-from-home. Their meeting is a direct result of globalisation and their budding friendship grows out of their shared experience of displacement. It is, in other words, globalisation that brings Dorothy and Gabriel/Solomon together and provides them with a common ground and a hope for togetherness across difference.

Gabriel/Solomon’s murder presents another, darker reality of globalisation; namely, rising xenophobia generated by increased migration across the world’s borders. Appadurai’s seminal examination of the interrelation between globalisation and culturally and racially motivated violence is an apt reference for our reading of Gabriel/Solomon’s dismal end in a globalisation context: Appadurai writes that “where the lines between us and them may have always [...] been blurred at the boundaries and unclear across large spaces and big numbers, globalization exacerbates these uncertainties and produces new incentives for cultural purification as more nations lose the illusion of national economic sovereignty or well-being” (Appadurai, 2006, p. 7). *A Distant Shore* presents Britain as a reactionary, ailing (national) community that seeks to eliminate visible markers of difference in an effort to retain a semblance of cultural homogeneity and sovereignty. The murder of Gabriel/Solomon seems, at first glance, to exemplify the termination of one kind of globalisation by another. –The hopeful vision of cross-cultural exchange and conviviality epitomised by Dorothy and Gabriel/Solomon’s friendship is ‘killed off’ in a violent exertion of national and cultural border-control. As we shall see, however, Dorothy’s encounter with Gabriel/Solomon also brings about an altered state of mind and a healing. After a time of convalescence, Dorothy begins to look forward to potential future meetings that abandon notions of cultural and racial similarity as the central basis for togetherness in favour of a more profoundly human perspective.

In topical terms, my reading of *A Distant Shore* as a ‘close-up’ globalisation narrative is prompted by the fact that the central storyline is driven forward by the two main events when globalisation processes directly intervene to shape the personal experiences of Dorothy and Gabriel/Solomon. The formal composition of the novel also invites this ‘close-up’ reading. The timeline and the development of events in *A Distant Shore* are highly compressed, ‘zooming in’ on the brief encounter and budding friendship between Dorothy and Gabriel/Solomon. The novel also includes the entire life stories of Dorothy and Gabriel/Solomon. They are presented to the reader through analepsis; that is, through a detailed representation of the figural consciousnesses of these two characters who are ever consumed by thoughts of their past. Thus, parts I, IV, and V are written as ‘autonomous interior monologue’ in the 1st person (Cohn, 1978): The discourse follows closely the vacillations of the narrators’ consciousness, reflecting their thoughts and emotions. It moves in associative leaps that bring the past into the present as the narrators recall preceding events. Parts II and III are, by contrast, written in the 3rd person, which produces a dissociating effect. Part II contains Solomon’s past as Gabriel, which he wishes “only to forget” (297), and part III contains Dorothy’s history of “abandonment” (203). The 3rd person effectively conveys the desire of Dorothy and Gabriel/Solomon to “erase” (300) their painful past and begin anew. By reference to the many analeptic sequences in the novel, which appear helter-skelter in a time-montage fashion, the reader can, with some effort, piece together the trajectories that led to the convergence of Dorothy and Gabriel/Solomon’s individual storylines in the village of Weston.

Consequently, if we apply the useful narratological distinction between ‘fabula’ and ‘sjuzet’ to the composition of *A Distant Shore*, then its fabula (or the central storyline) encompasses only two events and less than a third of the novel’s pages.³⁶ Its sjuzet (the way in which the story is organized) incorporates the remembered life stories of Dorothy and Gabriel/Solomon which led to these events and takes up the bulk of the novel. The bulk of *A Distant Shore* thus plays out inside the minds of the two central characters. It is written in a style that mimics the fluctuations of their thoughts and memories in an idiomatic, emotive discourse. This psychological realism generates a confounding reading experience. The shifts between different narrators, and between 1st and 3rd person narration, effects a confusion of

³⁶ Paul Cobley, *Narrative* (2006), pp. 15-16, 153-154.

narrative voices and perspectives. An extensive use of ellipsis leaves further holes in the narrative which must be filled in by the reader through a cumulative process of orientation that gradually closes cognitive gaps. The perpetual alternations between the narrative now and moments of analepsis disintegrate the chronology of the storyline. The reader is effectively disoriented in both time and space, ever uncertain as to his or her accurate location within the wider narrative context.

We remember from the beginning of this chapter that the segregation that happens in the close-up of a single fragment from its context produces an abstracting viewing experience. It thereby demands that the viewer engages in a “problematic and intriguing” process of “reading” the image. Thus, in *A Distant Shore* Dorothy and Gabriel/Solomon’s thought and memory fragments are presented in a deliberately chaotic manner that makes the reading process problematic and intriguing. By rendering the figural consciousness of Dorothy and Gabriel/Solomon in atomic detail, the narrative mode simultaneously obscures any sense of plot coherence narrative reliability. Yet, the entwined narratives of these two characters comment upon and elucidate each other, serving an orientational function, and so assist the reader in making sense of the unsettling textual space. The narrative structure of the novel mirrors the experience of the protagonists: The vertigo induced by their isolation from a stabilising social context is temporarily remedied during their brief encounters with each other, which offer transient moments of rest.

The remainder of my reading of *A Distant Shore* is divided into three sections: “On Edge”, “Transgressions”, and “Refuge”. The first section considers Dorothy and Gabriel/Solomon’s peripheral position as outsiders in Weston. With reference to Bauman’s theorisations of community, described in chapter one, I examine Weston as an allegory of the bordered (national) community that struggles to come to terms with a new world order of global networks. The second section, “Transgressions”, focuses on Dorothy and Gabriel/Solomon’s individual ‘excommunications’ and on their negotiations of national and conceptual boundaries. Finally, “Refuge” is centred on their frustrated attempts at networking as they seek to create alternative ties to place and sociality.

On Edge

Upon arrival in Stoneleigh, Dorothy “wander[s] down the hill” to Weston and “take[s] a good look around” (Phillips, 2004, p. 7). Her new village looks parochial. It consists of “terraced houses”, a “news-agent-cum-grocery store”, “a sub-post office”, a “fish-and-chip shop”, a “small stone church”, a single “pub” called “The Waterman’s Arms” (5-6), and a canal that runs close by the village. The terraced houses are gentrified but “typical miner’s houses”. Thus, Weston incorporates recognisable markers of traditional village life in the English Hamlet: The workman’s lodgings, the market, the church, and the inn. It is a “quaint” place, the provincial ambience of which is further heightened by the surrounding “farmer’s land” occupied by “cows and sheep” which “moved with an ease that left [...] no doubt that [...] this was their territory” (6). The scene emanates rural serenity, were it not for the unpleasant adjectives that Dorothy associates with what she sees when she walks through the village:

People stared at me like I had the mark of Cain on my forehead, so I pressed on and discovered the canal. It’s a murky strip of stagnant water, but because I was away from the noise of traffic, and the blank gaping stares of the villagers, it looked almost tolerable. The skeletal remains of a few barges were tied up by the shoreline [...] the second dead fish floated by, the silver crescent of its bloated stomach gracelessly breaching the surface. (7)

Instead of a soothing and recreational space, the canal and its shoreline are only “almost tolerable”, suffused with a pungent smell of decay that is caused by a complete cessation of the water’s movement. Conceivably, this was once a site where barges transported people and goods around England and beyond, a connective point along a busy network of waterways. Here, however, the barges are reduced to eerie skeletal remains. The site is a metaphorical indication of noteworthy “stagnation” within Weston itself: Underneath the deceptively picturesque façade of rural life there lurks an unpleasant reality. Thus, Ledent argues that the murky waters “represent the decay and lifelessness of a world that has a static view of itself”, a (national) community that “refuses to see the flow of newcomers as a refreshing addition, as would be the case with a river or a sea” (Ledent, 2004, p.157). Ledent regards the entirety of Weston as a symbolic microcosm of “England as a whole” (ibid.), an insular national community in decline, fraught with suspicion of new arrivals.

Indeed, to Dorothy and Gabriel/Solomon the village is a claustrophobic and menacing space. It is governed by mistrust and discord. Dorothy’s acute awareness of the

“blank gawping” of the villagers conveys an unnerving feeling of being under surveillance. Further, Gabriel/Solomon’s employment as “a night-watchman for the Stoneleigh estate” (56), his charge to “watch over” (280) and “protect” (283) the people in the cul-de-sac, suggests that the village is, in fact, marred by internal disorder and conflict.

Suggestively, the traditional miners’ houses in the village have been “replumbed, and the muck has been blasted off the faces of most of them so that they now look almost quaint” (4). In keeping with Ledent’s allegorical reading of Weston, this careful gentrification of the village comprises a symbolic revision of the past. The old village appears not in its original, ‘authentic’ state, but as a romanticised and idealised version of itself. It keeps up an outward, but illusory, appearance of harmonious country living. As the canal, which is “almost tolerable”, betrays some underlying decrepitude, so, too, do the “almost quaint” houses, only “most of which” have been successfully beautified. Clearly, the almost tolerable and almost quaint façade of the village conceals a bleak reality that is in fact characterised by intolerance and unease.

Upon Dorothy’s first visit at the local pub, the landlord offers her a drink “on the house” and tells her to “call it a welcome, if [she] like[s]” (8). This initial contact prompts a series of questions from the landlord. By offering Dorothy a drink on the house, the landlord establishes a contractual bond between them. Jacques Derrida sees the moment of welcome as being always already conditional (Derrida, 1997). The moment of welcome, Derrida argues, establishes a mutual bond of obligation between the host and the guest and ascertains the host’s supremacy within the space that the guest enters when he steps across the threshold. In the welcoming act, the host effectively asserts his power to admit or refuse his guest. By welcoming Dorothy to Weston, the landlord asserts his role as host and thereby implicitly identifies Dorothy as a guest, rather than as a fellow inhabitant. His ambiguous words of welcome demand that Dorothy answer his questions and account for herself.

Although she has only just moved in, Dorothy is already a source of local gossip, for the landlord knows that she has a doctor “in town” (8) and that she has come to Stoneleigh after her “retirement” (10). Another resident informs Dorothy that Weston “is a very small village [...] people, they talk, you know” (23). Clearly, in the small province the lines between private and public worlds are blurry. The landlord’s own “private life [is] on display” in the form of “family photos and mementos” that “decorate the walls” (7) of the pub. In a similar

fashion, Dorothy's personal details are seized upon by the villagers and turned into public property. Dorothy is uncomfortable with the landlord's interference, thinking that "it was proving difficult to shake him free and on to a different topic" (9). His enquiries resemble a physical entrapment, a comparison that emphasises Dorothy's sense of having her personal boundaries forcefully transgressed.

The landlord tells Dorothy about a Jewish Dr Epstein who came to Weston with her family but moved away because they failed to "blend in" (9). He concludes this cautionary tale with the instructive morale; "[y]ou've got to make an effort" (10). With this "you" he seems to address Dorothy directly, implicitly warning her to either blend in or to be expelled from the community. Notably, Dorothy reacts to his admonition by with a longing to be once again back in her bungalow in the new development of Stoneleigh: "I'm glad that I live in a cul-de-sac. There's something safe about a cul-de-sac. You can see everything from a cul-de-sac" (10). This incantatory repetition of the word "cul-de-sac" emphasises the intensity of her perceived need for security. From her closed street, she can see "everything" from a long distance. The view from her bungalow prevents surprise encounters. Stoneleigh thus offers a physical retreat, a refuge or a 'safe house', from the unsettling surveillance and enquiries of the villagers.

Weston is "divided into two": The old hamlet at the bottom of the hill, and Stoneleigh, the "new development", on top of the hill "on the edge of Weston" (4). The locals do not acknowledge the cul-de-sac as a part of Weston. They refer to Stoneleigh as the "new houses on the hill" (ibid.), thus presenting Stoneleigh as a recent and minor addition to the comparably old and well-established village. The old village refuses to "give up its name and identity" (3) and therefore repudiates developers' move to rename the town "Market Weston". Dorothy compares Weston to a theatre wherein the "cast" is "acting out their assigned roles" while the inhabitants of Stoneleigh constitute "a small group of extras [...] who have yet to be given [their] parts" (14). The imagery solidifies the province as a staged site, one that is defined by artifice rather than by natural and unmediated interaction. Roles in the village are "assigned" or "given" which hints at a prescriptive and regulatory environment. Instead of being incorporated into the village cast, the people in Stoneleigh are invariably classified as "newcomers, or posh so-and-sos" (5). As experienced by Dorothy, the locals perceive the inhabitants of as "interlopers" (29) and exercise a fervent demarcation of

the border that separates ‘us’ and ‘them’, ‘locals’ and ‘newcomers’. The new development is thus physically and conceptually set apart from the hamlet.

The division is at once a source of frustration and of relief for Dorothy and Gabriel/Solomon. Both of them are acutely aware of being subject to gawping and gossip when they walk through the village and, by comparison, feel a sense of security in their “houses on the hill” (8). Thus, Gabriel/Solomon reports:

I stand in the living room and study the street. There is a lamp-post outside my window which bestows light in such a way that it is possible for me to see out, but if I stand back and in shadow I do not think that it is possible for anybody to see in. There are also plastic window blinds, which give me further protection. This pleases me, for although I welcome the opportunity to look out at them, I do not wish these people to look in at me. (283)

His need for “protection” conveys his anxiety and his anticipation of an imminent, though unknown, threat. By drawing the “blinds” and deliberately positioning himself out of sight, he makes himself invisible. He strategically enters the position of a silent observer rather than a participant and a member of the village cast. Some of the locals send Gabriel/Solomon hostile letters in which they demand that he must “go away” (44) and only out of sight in his bungalow does he “feel safe” (295). In Dorothy and Gabriel/Solomon’s imagination, Weston is a place where they might feel “safe” (12, 169), where they will be able to “rest” (6, 169) and “lick their wounds” (312). The really existing community of Weston is, however, marred by hostility towards newcomers. It is a place of suspicion where neighbours keep an eye on each other and ‘excommunicate’ those who do not fit in. In its really existing form, the longed for community in Weston keeps Dorothy and Gabriel/Solomon ‘on edge’. Paradoxically, Weston is a site of both desire and aversion, rest and claustrophobia. The protagonists’ desire for safety, which they suppose the “serene” (112) village to provide, is immediately replaced by a claustrophobic sense of being kept in line by their neighbours. Weston is thus representative of Bauman’s conception of community in the age of globalisation described in chapter one. It epitomises a fundamental tension between the imagined ideal of community and its lived reality. Bauman conceptualises the ‘community of our dreams’ as a “‘warm’ place, a cosy and comfortable place” where “we all understand each other [...] and are hardly ever puzzled or taken aback”; a place where “[w]e are never strangers to each other”. Yet, according to Bauman, the utopian community that promises the subject embeddedness and

certainty is but a figment of the imagination, “another name for paradise lost” (Bauman, 2012, pp. 3-4). Certainly, for Dorothy and Gabriel/Solomon, their desired dwelling place turns out to be also a place of surveillance and suspicion. The hospitality of the local villagers is contractual and demands obedience in return. The villagers’ welcome of newcomers, if given, comes at the price of individual freedom. Moreover, Gabriel/Solomon observes that the English themselves seem “determined to avoid one another” and that they are “strangers to one another” (163). Rather than a site of warmth and familiarity, therefore, the English hamlet is a forbidding and lonely place.

Nonetheless, Gabriel/Solomon maintains hope that this might change over time. He interprets the villagers’ curt greetings in optimistic terms as “a beginning” (292). By contrast to Dorothy’s bleak impression of the canal, he sees the canal as “a most harmonious place” where it gives him “pleasure to notice how the trees bend over a path so that the ground is striped with thin fingers of sunlight” (281). These rays of sun, possibly symbolic glimmers of light and hope, beautify what the reader knows through Dorothy as an otherwise foreboding site. Yet, the pattern of “thin fingers” that falls on the pathway before him also bears a disconcerting resemblance to prison bars. The bar-like shadows frame the streaks of sunlight and serve as a metaphorical allusion to the paradoxical character of community, where rural idyll is marred by general decline and inimical discord. This moment when Gabriel/Solomon unknowingly retraces Dorothy’s footsteps is highly ambivalent. The tracks of the two characters converge by the canal, as do their contradictory observations of this place as representative of despondency and hope.

Weston is undergoing an identity crisis. At a time of increasing movement across geographical and conceptual borders, the community struggles to negotiate its shifting boundaries. A growing presence of newcomers challenges the myth of uniformity and self-containment. The new addition of Stoneleigh offers material proof that the traditional hamlet has spilled over its old confines; its terrain and its boundaries are now precariously unclear. ‘Home’ has been transformed into an uncanny space, a foreign territory, from which even the local inhabitants feel estranged. –For, every single inhabitant, whether they are Jewish, African, or, as Dorothy, born in the North to white working-class parents, must actively declare their loyalty to the community through successful assimilation. It is not only the black man and refugee, but also the local Englishwoman, who feels out of place in Weston. Thus,

Thomas Bonnici argues that *A Distant Shore* focuses on “identity viewed from a universal perspective: i.e. not narrowly defined by any one allegiance, be it ethnic, religious, class- or gender-related” (Bonnici, 2012, p. 283). The novel examines being-in-the-world “as something less associated with blackness or whiteness” and “concentrate[s] first and foremost on the rootlessness of the postmodern human being” (ibid.). Dorothy and Gabriel/Solomon, and indeed, all of the inhabitants of the new development, are transgressive outsiders who, by arriving on the edges of community, upset the balance between ‘inside’ and ‘outside’ and disrupt the supposed unity of the whole.

The remedy sought by the old village for the crumbling of familiar patterns is a disconcerting upholding of hollow signs of an unchanging, romanticised community and a radical policing of its now obsolete borders. Thus, David Ellis argues that in the face of “a globalized traffic in people, ideas, and institutions”, traditional community in *A Distant Shore* “seeks to reassert itself as an exclusive entity” (Ellis, 2013, p. 4). As the bordered narratives of a homogenous national community are challenged by an encroaching reality of growing diversity, the bordered (national) community resorts to an intensified “exclusion of the Other in general” (Bonnici, 2012, p. 285).

Transgressions.

Dorothy and Gabriel/Solomon suffer permanent homelessness wherever they find themselves, whether in Weston, London, or Africa. In the following I map first Dorothy’s and then Gabriel/Solomon’s border-crossings and consider the extent to which these two characters can be said to be representative of a ‘migrant’ experience.

Dorothy is not a migrant in the sense of having undertaken a physical journey across national borders. In geographical terms, her border-crossings are, as Alessandra DiMaio notes, the “small-scale migrations” of a “typically middle-class life” in England (DiMaio, 2012, p. 253). Dorothy is raised “on the fringes of middle-class respectability” (205) in a “nondescript town” (208) in the North, only five miles from Weston. At first glance, her origins and her lower middle-class upbringing seem to meet Weston village ‘standards’ of conformity and therefore to qualify her as a ‘natural’ insider to the local community in the old village. However, by moving to Manchester and obtaining a college degree, she has distanced herself from her originary environment. Her academic education transports her to “a world whose values”

Dorothy's father "despised"; one he contemptuously considered to be defined by "white-collar smugness" (205). Dorothy's entry into the university is represented here as a passage into a parallel "world", stressing the enormity of the breach signified by her departure from home. Clearly, the shift from the lower middle-class to academic upper-middle-class constitutes a border-crossing of an invisible, but significant social divide.

Dorothy also removes herself from her parent's sphere in spatial terms when she moves away with her husband Brian to live in Birmingham in the Midlands. Dorothy refers to her marital city as "Brian's Birmingham" (208). To her mind, she finds herself in Brian's territory, rather than in a shared home base. She sees Birmingham as a "city whose heart [is] a cold arterial clot of motorways, and whose suburbs [are] full of windows that display washable flowers" (205-206). The city is but a "cold" cluster of tarmac roads that look like a deadly embolism. The flowers in the windows of the houses in Birmingham might have attested to a cultivation of life and homely beauty. However, the plants are as synthetic and lifeless as the city's streets. The imagery envisions Dorothy's adopted city as a despondent site where existence behind the deceptively beautified windows is informed by artifice, a keeping up of appearances. In Birmingham, Dorothy is herself transformed into an inanimate object. Through an ongoing practice of submission and self-effacement in her marriage, Dorothy diminishes. She "stay[s] quiet" on subjects that Brian doesn't want to talk about, knowing that "Brian had no interest in her opinions":

She quickly learned that, but by not answering back she allowed him to look through and beyond her, until he was finally convinced that she did not exist. When Brian walked away, she too was convinced that he was walking away from nothing, and it hurt. (196-199)

This description echoes the marriage of Dorothy's parents in which her mother's "voice didn't count for much with Dad" (10). Dorothy and Brian's exchanges take "the form of monologues [...] in which her opinions [are] never sought" (199). Dorothy is effectively reduced to a passive audience for Brian's soliloquies, a voiceless body. She is symbolically drained of life, her marriage gradually dissolving her into "nothing". Her personhood is, in other words, annihilated by her self-imposed silence, which, she considers, is a "sacrifice" (212) for the higher purpose of upholding Brian's authority in the home.

Upon her return to the North after her divorce at the age of fifty, Dorothy has assumed the aspect of an unfamiliar outsider, or, potentially, a deserter. She is, Petra Tournay-Theodotou writes, “an excluded body-at-home” (Tournay-Theodotou, 2012, p. 302). The time spent away-from-home has altered her in the eyes of the community she left behind. Her affiliations to place and communitarian loyalties have been obscured by her transgressions of geographical, marital, and class divides. Dorothy’s expectation that in her native North she “would go home and find a position among her own” (208) is thwarted because this place is no longer her home.

The home she remembers from her childhood has changed. Thus, Dorothy wonders that with its “council houses sold off, Indians controlling the local economy, and new town houses that cost six figures”, the town in which she was born “would no longer be a town that [her parents] would recognise” (229). The old working-class tenancies sold off and the construction of new expensive housing testifies to substantial societal change. They signify the rise of the upper-middle classes. Moreover, a prominent presence of ethnic minorities attests to the town’s increasing entanglement with a global network. Dorothy’s hyperbolic comment that one of these minorities “control[s]” the local economy emphasises the sense of unfamiliarity she feels in this formerly familiar space. It suggests that her hometown has been usurped by a ‘foreign’ power. Once abandoned, Dorothy’s originary home is a place of no return, remaining only as a remembered location.

Even this remembered home, however, is fraught with ambiguity. Dorothy recalls that her father used to be the supreme head and patriarch in the family. He “didn’t believe in good women, only women who lived under the influence of good men” (25-26). He “didn’t take kindly to disagreement” (10) and, in the face of the “roaring [...] fire within him”, her mother “fell silent”, exerting a complete “impotence in the household” (11). The comparison of her his wrath to a raging fire conveys the devastating effects of his oppression. Dorothy remains ‘branded’ by his authority, suffering permanent trauma from his coercive behaviour. Her trauma manifests in compulsive references to her father’s memory. These references interrupt the storyline as Dorothy ponders on what her father might think about her actions, were he still alive. Thus, in her new bungalow in Stoneleigh, she knows that “Dad would have hated it” (10); at the pub in Weston, she reflects that “Dad would have liked the Waterman’s Arms” (13); and during encounters with Gabriel/Solomon, she recollects that her father “regarded coloureds as a challenge to the English identity” (42). Post mortem her father

continues to exert control over her life as a psychological presence that questions and critiques her choices and actions.

The principal source of Dorothy's homelessness and isolation, however, is engendered by a transgression of a different, metaphorical kind. This transgression exceeds by far the small-scale border-crossings of a 'typical middle-class life'. From Dorothy's memory fragments, the reader pieces together a history of family incest. Dorothy's father sexually abused Dorothy's little sister, Sheila. Dorothy does not directly relate this history. It is hinted at in her memories of familial discord and of a sudden, unexplained change in Sheila's behaviour towards their parents. Dorothy remembers with a tragic irony that Sheila used to be "Daddy's little pet" but in her teenage years seized "any chance to misbehave" (11). Dorothy has feelings of "guilt" (262) and "cowardice" (229) from her failing to be "of much use to Sheila" (11). The real source of this familial conflict is of such shameful severity that it resists language:

I sat back on the edge of my bed with [Sheila] [...] And then she told me. I knew I should have made more effort to help her instead of just staring at her, but it wasn't easy to hear what she had to say. I kept trying to get the conversation back onto more pleasant things [...] but Sheila would have none of it. She kept asking me why I wouldn't believe her, and why did I think that she would lie about something like that? 'You know he used to take me to the allotments with him' [...] The problem, of course, was that I did believe her. (70)

Their father's offences are ever inferred, though not put into words. The incest remains an undeclared certainty, ambiguously related by Dorothy as "what [Sheila] had to tell me". Dorothy silences her sister. She seeks to steer their conversation away from the transgression which, had it remained untold, could yet be repressed. In her attempt to silence Sheila, Dorothy becomes an accomplice to their father's transgressions. The use of italics in the text emphasises Dorothy's explicit knowledge of the assaults and, in effect, conveys that her failure to address it is a deliberate choice.

Conceivably, when Dorothy walks through Weston and imagines that she carries "the mark of Cain" on her forehead, she is referring to her complicity in their father's crimes. In the Bible Cain was marked by God for the sin of fratricide and cursed so no land would yield to his efforts to cultivate it, preventing any attempt to settle in one place. The mark of Cain thus reveals the eternal outcast and wanderer. In a similar manner, Dorothy's silencing

of Sheila constitutes a symbolical killing of a sibling. Her sentence of being the carrier of a “genetic stain” (229) manifests in her imagination as a visible sign that marks her as an untouchable. Her shame is an ‘inherited’ defect passed down to her from her father. Dorothy’s originary home thus becomes the ultimate source of her homelessness: It represents the shameful history that cannot be shared and which therefore precludes the openness and transparency that community demands from its members.

Living alone in the new development on the hill in Weston, Dorothy thinks of herself as a “lone bird” (14). The term infers a solitary existence outside a social group context. Dorothy attempts to recover, at least, a semblance of togetherness by reaching out to Sheila and going to visit her in London in a “search for calmness” (244). When Dorothy finds out that Sheila is terminally ill, she “understands that she owes Sheila the sacrifice of her company” (246). She decides to stay with Sheila until her death, her “sacrifice” an act of penitence. It is a debt which is “owed” and which, if redeemed, may absolve her from the guilt of abandoning Sheila in the past. Dorothy’s journey southward in search for “calmness” is, in fact, a quest for redemption. However, even after her sacrifice, Dorothy remains burdened by the past. In Weston, the mark of Cain feels as if edged onto her forehead, a sign of her shameful history which she imagines to be apparent to all the village.

Dorothy is a migrant in the metaphorical sense of being-away-from-home, disengaged from a stabilising social context. Meanwhile, she is ‘unhinged’ also in psychological terms. The formal qualities of her narrative style mimic the workings of a fragile and confused mind. In part I and V, the moment of locution coincides with the narrative moment and presents the reader with the direct unrolling of Dorothy’s inner life. There is no evidence of writing activity or of listeners being present on the scene. The narrative mode “records a mind involved in self-address” (Cohn, 1978, p. 221). Yet, Dorothy’s narration adopts a distinctive tone of oral colloquy, most profoundly exemplified by her repetitive use of the phrase “mind you” (18, ref), and therein retains a strange resonance of audience address. Whereas the autonomous interior monologue generally begins “*in mediam mentam*” –“casting the reader without warning into the privacy of a mind talking to itself about its own immediate business”– Dorothy’s interior monologue has a distinctively explanatory character (Cohn, 1978, p. 221). She describes her surrounding environment in detail and provides explanations

as to the (communal) layout of the village and of her own place within it. It is as if she addresses an audience utterly unfamiliar with her situation, a 'you' who remains disincarnate throughout the novel. This engenders a mysterious narrative presentation since, in spite of its seemingly audience-addressing form, we must suppose that Dorothy's narration is, in fact, self-address in a silent discourse. Dorothy addresses herself as if she were a stranger.

The reader gradually comes to understand that Dorothy's narration is unreliable not only because it contains almost exclusively "emotive, expressive signals" (Cohn, 1978, p. 225), but because it often conflicts with information given to the reader through the comments and questions of other characters. Dorothy explains, for example, that she has received a letter from her sister Sheila and she has told Gabriel/Solomon that Sheila "lives just only one hour away on the coast" (19). However, her psychiatrist Dr Williams contradicts this information when he asks Dorothy, "You've been through a lot recently, haven't you? [...] The death of your parents, your divorce, the death of your sister, early retirement, and then moving home, that's a lot of pressure for anybody to have to deal with in a short space of time" (17-18). The letter from Sheila is actually written by Dorothy herself, who confesses in part V: "After Sheila died I wrote to myself and pretended it was her doing the writing. It was all I had left of her" (71). Dorothy also gives the initial impression in part I that her early retirement was a decision brought on by her disappointment with the school system where "standards have plummeted" since the school "went comprehensive" (5). Yet, part III reveals that Dorothy was called to a disciplinary meeting during which the headmaster confronted her with allegations of "harassment" (238) towards a colleague, Geoff Waverly, with whom she had an affair. The headmaster sums up how she has "repeatedly left Mr Waverly notes in his box", "called his wife", "visited his lodgings", and "left him abusive mail" (ibid.). These allegations are in direct opposition to Dorothy's own account of her courtship with Mr Waverly. According to Dorothy, Mr Waverly encouraged her attentions and "begun this relationship by being led by blind desire" (235). Dorothy's early retirement was forced upon her as the only alternative to a harassment lawsuit.

Dorothy's unreliable narration indicates that she cannot effectively distinguish between fantasy and reality and that she has difficulty reading and navigating her social environment. Dorothy "visit[s]" (19) her parents' grave often to "talk to them" (64), "informing them of what's going on" (20). During these visits she has imaginary conversations with her mother and father and she make-believes that they respond as if they

were still alive. –Although, ironically, “Dad doesn’t say much” and her mother “can hardly get the words out” (64). She also has “difficulty sleeping” (34); her “mind wanders”; and she is “suffering from stress” (57). She recurrently experiences loss of time and “most of the time [...] stare[s] out the window and [doesn’t] hear anything” (23). The loss of time is mirrored in extensive use of ellipsis when the scene shifts unpredictably between temporal and spatial locations, therein upsetting the chronological unfolding of the narrative.

Furthermore, Dorothy’s narration is often eclipsed by other voices. Her inner discourse occasionally slips into an idiom that is identifiably different from her own. Her rendition of the personal story of her Indian lover Mahmood thus digresses into reflections on how, when he first arrived in England, his great expectations to his new country were thwarted by encounters with “fat-bellied Englishmen and their slatterns” with “beery breath” (202). Dorothy’s voice is here effaced and supplanted by Mahmood’s prejudice against the English conveyed in his words. In Dorothy’s rendition of his story, he is “a success” (203): She tells of his coming to England as a poor immigrant; of his “rising to a position where he ultimately had sole charge of The Khyber Pass” restaurant; and of his eventual “starting up a business of his own” (202). There is an underlying tone of pride to the way in which she relates Mahmood’s achievements. Nonetheless, this tale of success is contradicted when Dorothy’s own idiom briefly intervenes; “But she knows that Mahmood runs a modest newsagent’s in a small town in the north of England that boasts neither a cathedral nor a university” (ibid). Clearly, Dorothy is not wholly convinced by her own staging of Mahmood’s success story. Rather, she is the mouthpiece for Mahmood’s self-representation. Meanwhile, her own sentiments are kerbed as she takes deliberate care to ensure that “the dominant narrative is male” (203). Such passages, when Dorothy’s idiom becomes confused with the voices of other characters, when she internalises a language that is not her own, indicate a deep-seated self-estrangement. She mirrors what she believes that her surroundings expect her to be.

Without reference to a stabilising social context, Dorothy is unable to navigate in time and (social) space. Indeed, Dorothy describes her “loneliness” as a “condition” (37); a term of phrase that links her isolation and loneliness to a mental disorder. Her protracted being-away-from-home has effected a complete disorientation and an unravelling of the self. Her narration makes for a problematic reading experience. It is difficult to grasp the overall shape and credibility of her narrative, which combines thought fragments in an abstruse,

almost abstract form. The close-up narrative focus of the novel renders realistically Dorothy's 'inner logic', the workings of her mind. Simultaneously, however, this extreme zooming in on Dorothy's subjective, experiencing mind also obscures the contours of her contextual environment, the decoding of which is a difficult task indeed.

We now turn to an examination of Gabriel/Solomon's migrations which are at once different from, and yet share a significant common ground with Dorothy's border-crossings.

Like Dorothy, Gabriel is an 'excluded body-at-home'. He is homeless already before his physical journey away-from-home from Africa to England. He belongs to a minority in his country and his "blood marks [him] off as the nominal enemy" to the members of "the ruling tribe" (89). Gabriel is thus 'marked' by his inheritance, albeit in a very different fashion than Dorothy. He is an outsider within the hierarchical 'tribal' order that splits his country in two. Life in his home city is structured around austere class divisions. Thus, the city is encircled by "shanty towns" of "corrugated tin shelters which sprouted out of what looked like foul rubbish dumps" (140). These "tin-roofed slums" on "the edges" of the city are 'homes' to the "disabled and maimed" (ibid.). Thus, those who live on the fringes of social acceptability are also in physical terms consigned to the edges of society.

Gabriel, too, inhabits a peripheral position. He works as a messenger clerk for "civil servants and ministers in government"; "the type of men who drove large foreign cars and who travelled freely to Europe and even to the United States" (138-139). The foreign cars are emblems of a level of wealth that affords their owners access to the global marketplace. Their unlimited freedom of movement across continents serves as a testimony to a world within which financial freedom buys unrestricted manoeuvrability. Gabriel is a messenger clerk and lives a comparably 'grounded' life. He is not allowed to use the lifts, which are reserved for his superiors. He is consigned to the "stairwell where rats played in the corners" before he can "enter into the neon-lit outer offices" (ibid.) that house his employers. While lifts thus transport the government officials effortlessly to brightly lit offices, Gabriel and the other clerks painstakingly "climb" the "rotten stairwell" of the "ten-storey" building (ibid.). Gabriel fetches for his superiors "an envelope, or a pot of soup, or a new cell phone, or whatever [he] was told" (138). He is at the bottom of the social hierarchy, a servant of the privileged elites; his single function is to procure "whatever" they may require of him. A clerk "is not a man", but a "thing to be tolerated" (139), and so, within these corridors of governmental power,

Gabriel undergoes a process of dehumanisation. He is transformed from a man into an item of utility.

Within this governmental structure, the different levels of a hierarchical social order exist interdependently, but are kept carefully separate. Gabriel's country is an upstairs-downstairs realm: Men in power and 'men' without agency, a mobile elite and a grounded proletariat. Therein, *A Distant Shore* iterates the central motif of Dasgupta's "The House of the Frankfurt Mapmaker" in *Tokyo Cancelled* wherein Klaus Kaufmann and Deniz move along separate networks, one of privilege, the other of servitude. Indeed, the overall theme of *A Distant Shore* hinges upon that particular globalisation discourse which is also at the heart of *Tokyo Cancelled*: Namely, globalisation as a segregation of networks that delineates webs of privilege from webs of servitude. Globalisation appears as a dehumanising process that produces an enormous amount of 'human waste'. Those who, like Deniz and Gabriel, are resected from networks of privilege become part of a serving caste.

It is as a soldier in his home country that Gabriel undertakes his most significant 'border-crossing'. As was the case for Dorothy, it is a transgression in the metaphorical sense of the term that excommunicates him and compels his flight. The men in the rebel army take new names to mark their "rebirth" (142) as soldiers, and Gabriel is given the name Hawk. Hawk is a common reference for someone who fiercely advocates a certain cause; the name is used analogously with the predator bird and often denotes a tendency to favour war. However, this name, Gabriel ascertains, refers to the fact that he is "not a man to waste words", someone who remains "silent [...] most of the time" (ibid.). Gabriel dissociates himself from the other soldiers, who wear their warrior names proudly. He is "different" from his 'comrades'. He "ha[s] more education than the others" and "more ambition to make something of [himself]" (141). However, the name Hawk is at odds with Gabriel's reassurances of his virtuous nature. It seems contradictory to the Gabriel's claim that he does "not have the heart for savagery" and that he can "fight and kill if necessary. But only if necessary" (148). There is a notable discrepancy between Gabriel's own explanations as to the origin of his soldier name and its more usual predatorial symbolism. This discrepancy destabilises the reliability of his narration and indeed his claimed dissociation from his soldier comrades.

The moment when Gabriel observes that his men "listen to him whenever he chose[s] to speak" (141) carries a covert significance. The statement reveals that, although

Gabriel wishes to dissociate himself from the other rebels, he is, in fact, complicit to the “shameful manner” (148) in which they conduct war. Although he refuses to actively partake in their “mowing down [of] innocent women and children” (ibid.), his silence in the face of these transgressions constitutes nonetheless an implicit acceptance. Consequently, when government soldiers murder Gabriel’s family in revenge for his men’s transgressions, his complicity extends to his family’s deaths as well. It is his guilt by association that compels his flight out of his country.

As was the case for Dorothy, then, Gabriel also carries a shameful history of cowardice that cannot be shared:

Gabriel looks at the older man, but the words will not come [...] ‘Gabriel, did they kill everybody?’ Gabriel ignores the question but knows that through the gloom Joshua will be able to see that the tears are now streaming down his face. ‘Gabriel, you must tell me. Did they kill everybody?’ Gabriel shakes his head. ‘Your mother?’ Gabriel shakes his head. ‘But everybody else, is that it?’ Gabriel nods quickly. (87)

Though Joshua insistently addresses “Gabriel”, his attempts to draw answers from his nephew are met with silence. Gabriel’s shameful complicity and the traumatic loss of his family resist the need to be spoken. His inability to put the terrible event into words is such that it is compared to a physical incapacitation, feeling as if his lips “have been glued together” (111). When later confronted with questions about his past, Gabriel chooses to talk about his “uncomfortable journey” (277) from Africa to England as an illegal migrant and about his hopes for the future, but leaves much untold. Gabriel lists those aspects of his experience which he purposely leaves out of his account: “I told her nothing of how my heart bled [...] I told her nothing of prison [...] I told her nothing [...] I told her nothing of Hawk” (278). What he leaves out are those pieces of his story that are either too painful or too shameful to be put into words.

Gabriel/Solomon’s untold story becomes a source of permanent exclusion from community:

I was a coward who had trained himself to forget [...] I was no longer ‘Hawk’. I was no longer my mother’s Gabriel. It was Solomon who was lying in a warm bed in a strange room among these kind people. It was Solomon. I was Solomon [...] If I do not share my story, then I have only this one year to my life. I am a one-year-

old man who walks with heavy steps. I am a man burdened with a hidden history.
(297-300)

The rhetorical shift from “it was Solomon” to “I was Solomon” signifies a cognitive process of acceptance, whereby Gabriel assumes his new name Solomon and recognises his altered circumstance. Like the renaming of the soldiers in the rebel army, this moment is a symbolical ‘rebirth’. In order to become Solomon, he purposely forgets his past as Gabriel. He resects all that went before this moment to move beyond the traumatic past and towards “a new beginning” (94). However, by ‘forgetting’ Gabriel, his history as Solomon is reduced to a single year, the time that has passed since he left London for the North. Gabriel/Solomon’s peculiar description of himself as a “one-year-old man” conveys the fact that a significant part of him is lacking. Only “one half of [him] was alive and functioning” (291). Accordingly, his attempt to leave his former home and identity behind effects a splitting of the self.

If we accept Bauman’s claim that community is informed by transparency and openness, then Gabriel/Solomon’s inability to share his personal story is a source of isolation. Until he shares his story, he remains a “foreign person” (277) and a “stranger” (272), alienated not only from people in his new country, but also from himself. Paradoxically, the “one-year-old” Solomon has the gait of an old man who “walks with heavy steps”. In figurative terms, his untold history is like a heavy burden that, though it is kept carefully “hidden”, is revealed in the cumbersome way he moves. His secret transgression hinders manoeuvrability of his (social) environment.

Gabriel/Solomon’s physical journey from Africa to England is comprised by a disorienting series of border-crossings. He journeys with a group of illegal migrants across country. The journey happens in many stages by foot, truck, plane, bus, train, and ship, halting only briefly along the way, until another phase of their passage begins. The mode of his journey juxtaposes the unrestricted and effortless freedom of movement enjoyed by his former employers in the government. Whereas the government officials moved according to whim, his exodus is neither unrestricted, nor a matter of choice, but instead a necessary means of survival. It is a “secret journey” (296) undertaken along underground networks of irregular migration. In contrast to the wealthy government officials’ volitional ‘travel’, his journey across continents is coerced and concealed, invoking the fraught experience of the refugee.

Gabriel/Solomon’s journey begins in a “warehouse” (87):

an eerie chamber of light and shadow [...] small stubs of candle flicker in the fetid gloom. Scattered about the room are a dozen or so men who squat on the floor, some with their heads held in their hands, others with heads thrown back against the wall. In the corner there is a single bucket for bathing, and another, somewhat filthier, bucket for the men to relieve themselves in. (Ibid.)

The atmosphere is sorrowful and the body language of the migrants indicates despair. The flickering candles cast a spasmodic light and accentuates a nervous, unsettling air. Evidently, the impending journey to England does not trigger hopeful anticipation of a more favourable future in a new and better place. The uncomfortable and “fetid” warehouse foreshadows the fraught conditions of the ensuing passage during which the irregular migrants are deprived of even the most basic amenities, such as toilets and clean water. From the warehouse they are transported “like cargo”. They are “shepherded” (97) like animals from one stage of the journey to the next. The migrants are not in control of their journey. They have surrendered their fate to intermediaries who transport them as human ‘cargo’ to Europe. The imagery transforms the migrants from human subjects to non-human commodities freighted from Africa to Europe. Their worth no longer derives from the priceless value of human life, but from the monetary revenue they have come to represent to their traffickers.

Tournay-Theodotou considers that this moment in the text is but one of several that link Gabriel/Solomon’s journey to the Middle Passage. Tournay-Theodotou also observes how “the refugees are crammed into the airplane like slaves on a slave ship and the interior of the airplane looks to Gabriel/Solomon like ‘a large tubular warehouse’”. Indeed, the violent dislocation from home and the fraught conditions endured by the refugees along their journey in *A Distant Shore* may be understood as “a contemporary re-writing of the Middle Passage” (Tournay-Theodotou, 2012, p. 294). The Middle Passage epitomises the transformation of the subject into object, of the human into slave and cargo. Such allusions to the history of slavery serve as potent reminders of the persistence of oppressive and exploitative practices.

Gabriel/Solomon and his fellow refugees move through indeterminable landscapes along routes unknown to them. They do not know “exactly where they are” (96) and often move while concealed beneath stifling tarpaulin. There are no place names or distinguishing features which might reveal a precise location. Instead, they journey simply to “a place”, “across *some* water” in “a boat” (105). The locations through which they journey are generic and indeterminable waypoints along a route that cannot be mapped.

In spite of its indiscernible topography, however, the network of irregular migration is a highly operative, organised web. The migrants are transferred quickly between numerous mediators, including “men in military garb” (97), “uniformed men” (118) with “powerful guns” (98), and “the customs police” (103). An engrained trafficking network exists that moves irregular migrants between specialised underground gateways. The uniformed men who ‘transport’ the migrant cargo attest to a conflation of systemic and underground networks into one overarching Web. The official-looking men are conceivably commissioned to safeguard the border and prevent irregular crossings. However, these same officials also act as the facilitators who enable the illegal passage of the refugees. Accordingly, in *A Distant Shore* there are a number of leaks and gateways which connect systemic and underground networks. At their peril, irregular migrants like Gabriel/Solomon attempt to pass through these gateways and thus transgress the heavily guarded national barriers of the world.

As Gabriel/Solomon sits aboard the plane that carries him out of Africa he “imagines this plane cutting neatly through the clouds with the bush carpet, and then the sand carpet, and then the water carpet way down beneath [him]” (99). He imagines a world without borders, a single planetary space of seamlessly alternating landscapes. However, the mode of his flight to England contests his vision of a borderless world. His journey is punctuated by an endless series of dangerous border crossings. Since he can never ascertain the precise location of the border, his crossings remain unclear. Thus, his crossing from Africa into Europe, via Italy, takes place in aerial territory, and his passage from Italy into England occurs at an unspecified point along an uninterrupted three-day train ride. His entry into England happens at a similarly unspecified point aboard a ferry somewhere in the English Channel.

Yet, although indiscernible, Gabriel/Solomon’s border-crossings constitute the principal orientational markers that testify to the journey’s onward progression. He experiences the border as a substantial obstacle that can be crossed only in secret and with the danger of being intercepted by the authorities. His journey presents the border in a highly ambivalent light. On the one hand, the border is obscured and therefore sustains an illusion of the world as a single space of unobstructed global movement. On the other hand, Gabriel/Solomon’s crossings directly juxtapose celebrative globalisation narratives of unlimited freedom of movement. Like Deniz in “The House of the Frankfurt Mapmaker”, he is the ‘not so fortunate’ global subject who, unlike the exterritorial elite, is not ‘in control’ of his journey.

Rather than a moment of welcome, Gabriel/Solomon's 'arrival' in England signifies his entrance into a symbolically unforgiving and disorientating environment. He "wander[s]" the "overcast streets of London" (168):

the city bathed in the weak yellow glare of afternoon street lights. The sky was a grey blanket that hung limply over Gabriel's head, while all around him traffic roared so that no matter which direction he walked in, it was impossible to escape the terrible noise [...] there was, as yet, no order to his life. He was lost [...] Gabriel does not recognise a single building he walks past, or a junction that he crosses, or a street that he turns into [...] he now understands that these directionless streets were not laid out to welcome the feet of newcomers. (168, 177)

Gabriel/Solomon is displaced in temporal as well as spatial terms. He has no grasp of the exact time of day or of his precise location. The sounds of traffic confound and overwhelm his senses. He is absorbed within the city's grasp in a manner that recalls de Certeau's pedestrian. He attempts, but fails, to 'read' the metropolis, which appears to him as a confusing maze of buildings, junctions, and streets. His disorientation is emphasised further by his "wandering" through the streets of London; a term that connotes aimless drifting rather than determined flow. Accordingly, the outcome of Gabriel/Solomon's crossing over the physical border into England is not the long-awaited moment of arrival and conclusion of his journey. Instead, England is another equivocal waypoint along his seemingly endless journey, the outline of which becomes more abstruse with every stopping and starting point.

Due to the references in *A Distant Shore* to a colonial past, Gabriel/Solomon has been often characterised as a 'postcolonial' migrant, and the upheaval in his country has been read as a result of European imperialism³⁷. Thus, Sandra Courtman reads the "asylum-seeker" as "a visible reminder of the consequences of Europe's exploitative relationship with Africa" (Courtman, 2012, p. 273). Courtman argues that through the plight of Gabriel/Solomon, *A Distant Shore* "elicits the understanding of how [...] the European colonial project left Africa impoverished" (Courtman, 2012, p. 266). DiMaio also sees Gabriel/Solomon as a figure that epitomises the continuous impact of Europe's imperial legacy. DiMaio sees his fraught

³⁷ David Farrier, 2008, p. 404; Alessandra Di Maio, 2012, pp. 260-261; Jessica Maufort, 2014, p. 164.

African country as a testament to the ways in which colonialism has “led to destruction of Africa while causing a diaspora of survivors seeking political asylum all over the globe, including Britain” (DiMaio, 2012, p. 251). However, in my view, to argue that *A Distant Shore* revolves around the implications of European imperialism in Africa is to commit the methodological error of imposing upon the text an extra-textual reality. Such a reading overstates the emphasis in the novel on the influence of colonial legacies upon the present. I contend that the novel points instead to significant restructurations of “the colonial, or postcolonial, model” in a global age. In this vein I suggest that the character of Gabriel/Solomon might therefore more usefully be considered as emerging from a global rather than a postcolonial context.

The designation of ‘postcolonial’ migrant seems to indicate that the migrant has a tangible and felt connection to an (formerly) imperial centre. Gabriel/Solomon, however, thinks of himself as “a foreign person” (277) and a “stranger” (272, 276) in England. He has no prior relationship with or sense of attachment to England, which he feels “is not [his] country” (79). From a globalisation context, he emerges as the ultimate outsider and drifter, for while England is not his country, he also has “no other country” (278) to call home. The home he left behind is wrecked by civil war and he knows that he cannot “return to [his] country, for there [is] nothing for [him] to return to” (296). He is a (global) migrant without a nation and with no claim to any other place of belonging; he is homeless everywhere.

Mike, a friend of Gabriel/Solomon, makes an ambiguous attempt to explain to him the subtleties of and fine distinctions between different “kinds of people” (290), different kinds of migrants, in England. “Immigrants”, he says, “still make their women trail after them”, “they have their mosques and temples, and their butcher shops where they kill animals in the basement and do whatever they do with the blood” (290). Mike’s reference to “their mosques and temples” casts the immigrant implicitly as overly religious, or ‘superstitious’, and therefore primitive. His invocation of bloody slaughterhouses and female subjugation implies that the immigrant is also of a savage and brutal nature that might be amended only through extensive “training” programmes (ibid.). His rhetoric of ‘us’ versus ‘them’ echoes in disturbing ways with colonial practices in the past. In the orientalist discourse of European empires, the racial ‘other’ was classified in negative terms as an uncivilised endangerment to a superior white civilization. This juxtaposition legitimated white colonial domination and justified segregationist practices. Yet, these practises have an altered form in a global age. In

A Distant Shore, the colonial dichotomy of white/black, civilised/uncivilised, self/other is transposed onto a different context. The uncivilised other is no longer easily distinguishable from the members of the (national) community by reference to a racial or ethnic difference. He is instead the immigrant in any guise, supposedly set apart from the productive and civilised citizens of the (national) community by being a “scrounger” (290). It is the figure of the migrant in general, then, not the racial or cultural ‘other’ in particular, who is dehumanised and demonised.

Gabriel/Solomon situation is “different” from that of the immigrant, Mike explains, because he is “escaping oppression” and because there are “procedures for that” (ibid.). His situation is different because his presence in England is a last resort and because the state has procedures by which to classify him as a particular kind of alien. These procedures enable the government to survey and regulate his movements within England. The perceived threat that Gabriel/Solomon poses to the (national) community is considered to be reduced by the facts that his transgression of the national border is not wilful and that he is ‘under control’, “processed” (278) by the state and assimilated within the system.

The gradations of strangerhood constitute a mode of classification that separates categories of migrants into ‘immigrants’, ‘irregular migrants’, ‘refugees’, and more by reference to arbitrary and often invisible differences. In Gabriel/Solomon’s experience, however, such fine distinctions are easily overlooked or confused. Certainly, the villagers of Weston are insensible to these supposed categorical variations when they threaten and kill him to eliminate his unwanted presence. Moreover, in streets of London, Gabriel/Solomon is identified as “one of those refugee blokes” coming to England to “sponge off the welfare state” (170). The statement directly contradicts Mike’s explanation of how refugees are ‘different’ from other ‘types’ of migrants. In fact, ‘those refugees’ are classified in conspicuously similar terms to Mike’s ‘immigrants’, allegedly recognizable by an inherent laziness.

The ambiguous endeavours of several characters in *A Distant Shore* to identify and to expel the migrant ‘other’ are symptomatic of how globalisation ‘unsettles’ familiar (social) structures. Indeed, Gabriel/Solomon’s encounters with the traditional (national) community of England reveal that it is an intrinsically perilous space not only for newcomers like him, but also for its own members. The country harbours a large number of homeless and destitute people. Clearly, the ‘welfare’ state leaves much to be desired, since a significant number of its citizens do not fare very well at all. Escalating immigration into England is held responsible

for this development. The entire English “system”, so a Mr Anderson explains to Gabriel/Solomon, is “creaking to breaking point” due to an enormous influx of migrants (289). In *A Distant Shore*, the migrant is, in effect, a perceived enemy of the state. The figure of the migrant in any guise is a tangible embodiment of the much more far-reaching and often incomprehensible effects of globalisation.

The remodelled narrative of ‘otherness’ in a global age legitimates intensified government control as well as a more general policing of geographical and conceptual borders. It also generates new hierarchies which are different from colonial inequalities of the past. In order to understand, and therein possibly to counteract, these new inequalities, it is necessary to recognise the contemporary dynamics from which they emerge and not to misinterpret them as simply rooted in earlier forms of imperialism.

Gabriel/Solomon’s story moves fitfully between different locations in time and space. The route he travels by is as unintelligible to the reader as it is to Gabriel/Solomon himself. It is revealed in a close-up montage fashion, in story fragments that tell of different stopping and starting points along his journey. The style of his narrative mirrors the disorientating and incomprehensible topography of his physical journey. The narration in parts II and IV of the novel thus alternates between 3rd and 1st person, past and present, as well as between dream-states, memories and real-time experiences. These alternations blur the chronology of the narrative and clouds distinctions between fantasy and reality. They leave the reader in doubt as to the precise location of each story fragment within the wider context of the narrative. The fragmented form makes for a disorientating reading experience. It accentuates the Gabriel/Solomon’s disorientation as he is transported through the complex networks of irregular migration.

In terms of narrative style, part II about Gabriel’s flight to England stands in sharp relief to the remainder of *A Distant Shore*: Whereas parts I, III, IV, and V present the consciousness of Dorothy and Solomon in detail through an idiomatic and emotive discourse, part II is written in what appears to be an almost exclusive mode of dissonant 3rd person narration. The narrator has no or only diminutive access to Gabriel’s inner life. The narrator reports objectively on events, seemingly as they take place outside the interpretative filter of a figural consciousness. I suggest that this distanced narrative voice is, in fact, a continuation of Phillips’ psychological realism; that part II unfolds in this manner Gabriel/Solomon’s trauma,

manifested as self-estrangement: For, occasionally the narration also slips into what Cohn terms 'psycho-narration'. Psycho-narration, as defined by Cohn, is "a narrator's discourse about a character's consciousness" (Cohn, 1978, p. 14); that is, while the narrator has some access to the consciousness of the protagonist, there remains a clear distinction between the two entities. The psycho-narrative moments provide the reader with a fleeting insight into Gabriel's thoughts and emotions. The narrating voice reports for example, that "Gabriel understands that this is sport [...] He looks on without emotion" (84); that "Gabriel knows that he will have to leave this place" (85); and that he "imagines that his uncle is inside" (86).

These shifts between outer narration and psycho-narration produce a liminal narrative voice that is located neither wholly outside, nor entirely inside Gabriel/Solomon's consciousness. It conveys a profoundly traumatised psychology that represses emotional responses in order to keep a fragile self from falling apart.

The fabula of part II begins with Gabriel in an English prison and it ends with his release and the continuation of his journey from London to the North as Solomon Bartholomew. Meanwhile, when Gabriel falls asleep, the storyline is interrupted by analeptic passages that recount his journey from Africa to England (i.e. 83, 96, 118, 155). When he closes his eyes, the narrative delves into the past he wishes to forget.

Consequently, while part II appears at first glance to be written as dissonant 3rd person narration or psycho-narration, we must logically assume that these retrospective passages are in fact direct reflections of Gabriel's consciousness, his 'quoted interior monologue' (Cohn, 1978, pp. 14, 58). The shifts between the distanced narrating voice and Gabriel's own inner discourse signal alternations between Gabriel/Solomon's conscious and subconscious states. While he is awake, he purposely blocks painful memories of the past and of the home he left behind, his emotional detachment accentuated by the objectively reporting 3rd person narration. In his subconscious states, however, the memories cannot be suppressed, but resurface in his mind. Paradoxically, even Gabriel/Solomon's quoted interior monologue, which provides an intimate insight into his mind, retains an objectively reporting style. The effect is profoundly dissociating. It creates an emotional distance to the narrative which is at odds with the otherwise poignant depictions of Gabriel/Solomon's difficult journey. The discrepancy compels the reader to fill in the emotive void by picturing what his journey must feel like. It creates an interpretative space which demands that the reader put himself or herself in Gabriel/Solomon's place; that we engage in an empathetic attempt to zoom in on

and imagine the plight of the refugee. Phillips' narrative style thereby cancels conceptions of the migrant as the essential 'other'. It generates a close-up, relational (reading) experience of globalisation as disengagement.

Refuge?

Jessica Maufort skilfully shows the ways in which *A Distant Shore* interweaves "the lived experience" of the two protagonists with "their environment", environment understood as social context as much as geographical location (Maufort, 2014, p. 155). Thus, Maufort considers that "geographical and psychological displacement feed into one another" in the novel (Maufort, 2014, p. 164). The experience of excommunication and physical consignment to the edges of community is coupled with a psychological state of being perpetually 'on edge'. The homelessness experienced by Dorothy and Gabriel/Solomon is accompanied by a profound disorientation in time and (social) space, as exemplified by the fragmented narrative style of the novel. As Dorothy and Gabriel/Solomon face excommunication, they face also an existential crisis. They are unhinged from communal networks, which according to Bauman, provide a stable sense of self in the world. As a result of this displacement, they lack possess contextual, orientational markers by which to read and navigate their (social) environment. Their disengagement from community is not experienced as a celebratory state of individual freedom to establish new and more serviceable connections. It is a potentially devastating 'condition' of loneliness and isolation.

Dorothy and Gabriel/Solomon long for, and actively seek to bring about, the moment of arrival when their being-away-from-home will be alleviated by a homecoming. Both fantasise about finding a place of refuge where they may "rest" (169) and where they will feel "safe" (10); as Dorothy notes, a place where she will "find a position among her own" (208). The qualities of this desired home echo with Bauman's theorisations of community as a (social) space where "we can relax, we are safe [...] We are never strangers to each other" (see chapter one). However, this site is but an imagined ideal – for, even the village of Weston, an epitome of local community life, fails to deliver on every count.

We proceed now to examine the process of networking whereby, in order to remedy their isolation, Dorothy and Gabriel/Solomon establish alternative points of attachment that might substitute the sense of refuge and dwelling epitomised yet withheld by community.

It is no insignificant point that in Dorothy and Gabriel/Solomon's efforts to form alternative ties, the characters with whom they connect are all strangers, or outsiders. They are people who in different ways fall outside the narrow confines of communal conformity.

Thus, Dorothy pursues the attentions of the Indian immigrant Mahmood and the newcomer to her school, the relief teacher Geoff Waverly. She is acutely alert to signifiers that mark some inherent difference or outsider status. Accordingly, she emphasises Mahmood's "brown face" (200) and "black eyes" (212); that the "oils or lotions he rubbed into his skin were in all likelihood related to his culture" (197); and that her classical music "damaged his oriental ear" (196). She "planned her campaign" (ibid.) with Mahmood and "framed the invitation as an opportunity for social intercourse and cultural exchange in an English home" (200). These terms of phrase suggest that theirs is a calculated encounter on Dorothy's part with someone whom she perceives as a racial and cultural 'other'. By arranging their meeting in her house, an "English home", she strategically casts herself as Mahmood's intended host. He is her guest not only because he is a visitor in her house, but also because he is an immigrant to her native England. She envisions herself as the instigator and director of their relationship, supposedly in absolute control of their connection, their "cultural exchange" invariably taking place on her terms. However, the initial "coyness" (197), which made Mahmood a subject of interest to Dorothy, is quickly replaced by "indifference" (198). During their sexual encounters, Dorothy feels like "an object speared" that "bore his weight" (199). The imagery renders her an object of utility symbolically crushed beneath Mahmood's weight. Rather than a respectful and manageable presence, Dorothy's intended guest is overpowering and intrusive, and he subjugates his host. Mahmood's presence turns Dorothy's English home into hostile, foreign territory.

Dorothy is attracted to Geoff Waverly from Nottingham not because of a racial or cultural difference, but because he exudes timidity during their first encounter, a trait he shares with Mahmood. She notices that he is "unsure" and interprets his "high-pitched laughter" as "nervous" (ibid.). She sees him "idling by the door" to the teachers lounge and invites him in, "Well, come on in. Nobody's going to bite" (216). By inviting the hesitant Geoff across the threshold into the staffroom Dorothy once more asserts herself as a welcoming host, a person in charge. Her position as a long-time employee at the school puts her in a superior position to Geoff who is a newly arrived supply teacher and therefore a

professional outsider. When she has him over for dinner, Geoff “pours himself a second and then a third glass [of wine]”, “eats quickly and then pushes his plate away” (232). He does not adhere to the guest’s unspoken code of courteous conduct, but instead makes himself at home. Dorothy’s desire for an intimate connection remains unfulfilled, as Geoff commits only to “sharing his body” and not “his thoughts” (230).

In her attempts to establish intimate relationships, Dorothy seeks out people like Mahmood and Geoff who are on the edges of ‘communities’ to which she considers herself an inalienable member. However, her invitees transgress her personal boundaries. The connections once formed spin out of her control. Instead of providing safety, rest, and companionship, her (un)romantic entanglements are “without intimacy” (218), sources of degradation and emotional hurt. Since her ties are invariably severed by others, the outcome of her efforts to connect is a recurring experience of abandonment. The making of new connections is a process fraught by the potential prospect of further marginalisation. Dorothy’s precarious negotiation of her social environment points to a more general breakdown in the global order of traditional delineations between host and guest, citizen and foreigner.

Gabriel/Solomon’s connects briefly with the English girl Denise, the Irish immigrant Mike, and Scottish immigrants Mr and Mrs Anderson. Like Dorothy’s connections, each of these characters is, in different ways, an outsider in England. Denise is from a ‘broken’ family. Her mother “left ages ago” and she lives with her “unemployed”, abusive father (184). She offers Gabriel/Solomon refuge in an abandoned house, which is also her “place of safety” (188) where she hides from her father. Though friendly, the few communications between them are frustrated by a cultural cleft and by mutual prejudice. Thus, Denise iterates racial stereotypes, asking if Gabriel/Solomon “can sing or dance” (186) and wants to know what Africa is like, “it’s not really jungle and animals, is it?” (184). Gabriel/Solomon is, in his turn, offended by what he perceives as her direct, to his eyes “disrespectful” (161) manner. He is “anger[ed]” (ibid.) by her failure to live up to his expectations of female purity and modesty, noting for example that “her appearance, with her dirty, unwashed blonde hair, and her skirt riding up her thigh is unacceptable” (183). Each of them makes an attempt to understand the other and to share their story, but both are limited by their own point of view and are unable to get their point across the cultural cleft. Gabriel/Solomon “has no idea how to participate in this

conversation” and Denise says that she doesn’t “get it” when he talks about his hopes for his “future children” in England (185). In the meeting between these two strangers, a level of untranslatability hinders successful communication and complete understanding. Their impression of the other remains strongly influenced by their very different cultural codes. Yet, when Gabriel/Solomon senses that Denise is “distressed” (186) by thoughts of her father, his contempt for the ‘disrespectful’ girl transmutes into empathy and he “feels moved to rescue her” (187). A moment of silent communication ensues when they sit together, Gabriel/Solomon’s arms around Denise, each finding “comfort” (188) in the other’s company. Though nothing more is said between them, their frustrated attempts at direct communication abandoned, Gabriel/Solomon “listens” intently to Denise’s crying and “he understands” (ibid.). An empathetic connection is established that transcends cultural differences and eclipses the need for words. This moment of tacit understanding, comfort, and mutual trust constitutes a respite from Gabriel/Solomon’s stressful journey. Moreover, it offers the rest and safety for which he has been searching and which the traditional community of Weston does not deliver.

Mr and Mrs Anderson and Mike become like an adopted family to Gabriel/Solomon. Mr and Mrs Anderson refer to themselves as Mum and Dad, and Mrs Anderson speaks of Mike and Gabriel/Solomon as “the sons she never had” (287). These four immigrants make up a provisional family with a father, a mother, and two grown-up brothers. The familial terminology links the four strangers together as a unit and hints at a relation of warmth and security akin to Bauman’s ‘community of our dreams’. Indeed, Gabriel/Solomon is “much caressed by this family” (271), and its members, who make him “feel safe” (277), are compared to “guardian angels” (280). In community, as we have seen, the qualities of safety, warmth, and understanding are preconditioned by transparent ties and homogeneity. Gabriel/Solomon’s closely-knit ‘family’ of immigrants in England is, by contrast, held together by empathetic links and trust between strangers.

Relatedly, Tournay-Theodotou observes that in *A Distant Shore* “Phillips seems to have deliberately constructed a palette of characters that are not English but different in their own ways in order to show how a similarly marginalized position in society promotes a deeper understanding of and sympathy for the plight of another stranger” (Tournay-Theodotou, p. 304).

The moments of mutual empathy and understanding are, however, abruptly cancelled. Gabriel/Solomon's encounter with Denise becomes a source of estrangement when he falls victim to racial prejudice of the black man as a sexual predator and is accused of raping the girl. Mike dies suddenly in a car accident. Gabriel/Solomon is "forced to sever [his] links with Mr and Mrs Anderson" (297) when they relocate to their native Scotland. Accordingly, whatever refuge Gabriel/Solomon finds through the kindness of strangers, the reprieve is but brief and intercepted by disappointment, loss, and abandonment.

It is an important point that not all of Phillips' strangers in *A Distant Shore* are equally 'strange'. The character of Mike is an illustrative point in case. Mike asserts that he is "a traditionalist" who wants "fish and chips, not curry and chips" (290). Mike's love for the national specialty and distaste for foreign curry flavours is a metaphorical expression of his unequivocal sense of attachment to England. He expresses severe prejudice and mistrust of immigrants who, he says, "come from the countryside and [...] have never seen a flush toilet or a light switch" (290). In Mike's imagination, the figure of the migrant arrives from a technologically backward realm and brings his uncivilised ways with him into the comparably 'modern' England. Mike thus serves as a vehicle for globalist discourses, discussed in chapter one, which establish a dichotomous relationship between the West and the Rest, the developed and the under-developed and which echo with the Self/Other, civilised/uncivilised dichotomies of Said's Orientalism, but in a new context of global migration. –This particular dichotomy is ironic when contrasted with the symbolically retrograde community of Weston. It is interesting that this prejudice against newcomers is represented by a character who is himself an immigrant. The Irish immigrant Mike perceives of himself as a representative of 'traditional' Englishness. To Gabriel/Solomon, however, "Mike did not appear to be like the other English people" he encounters" (272). The term of phrase 'other English people' shows that, while Gabriel/Solomon initially identifies the racially white Mike as an Englishman, he also detects an undisclosed difference that sets Mike apart.

A confusing array of different 'kinds' of strangerhood complicates navigation of communitarian borders for the characters in *A Distant Shore*. Distinctions between the categories of locals and newcomers are fundamentally obscure, if not entirely unintelligible. The effect is, at least, two-fold: Firstly, it realistically reflects the blurring boundaries in a global age where movement and exchange happens through networks that, more often than

not, cut across national and conceptual borders. Secondly, the confusion of categories in the novel challenges bordered discourses of belonging which, at the present moment in time, have gained enormous symbolical power in public debates about the implications of global migration.

The connection between Dorothy and Gabriel/Solomon differs from the supposedly ‘natural’ and transparent ties in the community of Weston. Whereas, according to Bauman, communal ties are inherent and stable, the connection between Dorothy and Gabriel/Solomon is spontaneously and transient. In the ‘community of our dreams’ unity is achieved through similarity. The link between Dorothy and Gabriel/Solomon is, by contrast, rooted in a single, shared experience of marginalisation. These two protagonists inhabit a world that has transmuted into a foreign realm as familiar structures collapse. In Dorothy’s England, shifting class divisions, urbanisation, and immigration contest the myth of an unchanging, unified, and homogenous nation. In Gabriel/Solomon’s African country, the chaos of civil war corrodes societal order and transforms his homeland into a warzone.

Dorothy and Gabriel/Solomon are, each in their way, homeless, and both of them undertake coerced journeys across geographical and conceptual borders, attempting but failing to leave the past behind:

[Dorothy] looks out of her window and sees the man next door who’s washing his car [...] Aside from this man, there is nobody else in sight on this bleak afternoon. Just this lonely man who washes his car with a concentration that suggests a difficult life is informing the circular motion of his right hand. His every movement would appear to be an attempt to erase a past that he no longer wishes to be reminded of. She looks at him and she understands. (268)

Notably, Dorothy does not actually know Gabriel/Solomon’s personal history. She knows only that “he washes his car, he drives [her] to the hospital, he stays at home behind his blinds. At night he patrols the cul-de-sac” (34). These thoughts reflect but Dorothy’s own interpretations, her subjective reading, of what Gabriel/Solomon’s actions “would appear” to signify. She intuits that he is “lonely and in need of conversation” (57). He becomes a mirror for her own “difficult life” and her “loneliness” (37). She extracts from his careful cleaning of the car a symbolical meaning that iterates her own desire “to erase” her shameful past. She imagines that through this shared experience the two of them have a tacit understanding, a

common ground. Dorothy's gaze is returned by Gabriel/Solomon who confesses that he "secretly watch[es] her from [his] living room" (293). He observes that Dorothy "appears lonely" (293) and therein iterates her act of emotive projection. An empathetic link is thereby inaugurated between Dorothy and Gabriel/Solomon as they sense aspects of themselves reflected in the other.

When Dorothy hears Gabriel/Solomon "knocking at the door" (15), the silence in her bungalow is interrupted. In this moment of initial contact, when a connection is established between them, the silence that manifests their isolation in the rest of the novel is suggestively broken. Fittingly, Dorothy refers to Gabriel/Solomon as her "knight in shining armour" (19), a saviour and a hero. Whereas she perceived the landlord's enquiries in the Waterman's Arms as an implicit act of coercion, when Gabriel/Solomon asks her if "everything [is] alright?" (31), she understands that he "is trying to help" (33):

'Miss Jones, it is true that sometimes life can be difficult, yes?' He turns to face me. The dying sun forms a halo around his head and I find myself more caught up with this image than with his enquiry. Solomon notices that my attention has drifted off, but he simply waits until my mind returns [...] 'Yes, Solomon, sometimes life can be difficult.' (32)

Gabriel/Solomon looks to Dorothy like an angel. This comparison subverts the discourse of 'uncivilised' newcomers and 'civilised' nationals conveyed by Mike. Instead of a 'primitive', disruptive presence, the migrant is portrayed here as a 'higher being' of divine insight. Relatedly, Dorothy speaks of Gabriel/Solomon as "the caretaker of Stoneleigh" (19), assigning to him an ambiguous role. The term 'caretaker' positions him as a handyman who serves the upper middle-class inhabitants of Stoneleigh. The terminology thus understood positions the migrant at the bottom of the social hierarchy in the village. Yet, the term also refers to a caregiving function and assigns to Gabriel/Solomon the role of custodian and saviour of the fragmented Weston. Indeed, he thinks of himself not as a 'caretaker', but as a "night-watchman" (280), a protector. The migrant emerges as a figure of enlightenment and security, someone who can, potentially, provide a new and much needed insight: For, he understands the permeable character of the border and the incongruence of bordered conceptions of belonging in a world order of converging networks. As "The Changeling" envisions the outsider Bernard as a prophetic figure in the age of globalisation, so, too, does *A Distant Shore* represent the migrant as playing a central role in the age of globalisation.

Gabriel/Solomon makes Dorothy “feel safe” (19), and she is “simply happy to be in his company” (35). She thinks of him as her “friend” (49), a word that implies warmth and cordial regard. She imagines that he sits in his bungalow “wanting [her]” (58) and her fantasy is not far off the mark since he does indeed think of her “sometimes” and longs to tell her his story. Dorothy’s desired refuge is not found in a particular location or within a racially and culturally homogeneous community. Her sense of togetherness and safety is not found ‘among her own’ in the Northern village, but emerges temporarily in moments spent with an African man and a newcomer to England. The cultural contact zone comes to serve as a point of attachment and a source of dwelling through togetherness, thus, for a brief moment, realising the potential inherent in ‘global’ encounters.

The differences between Dorothy and Gabriel/Solomon are not dissolved as a result of their connection. Their converging stories provide for a relationship that cuts across, but does not transcend, differences of nationality, culture, gender, and age. In contrast to community which, as we have seen, demands conformity, Dorothy and Gabriel/Solomon’s relationship recognises and allows for difference:

‘You have not really spoken of your illness. I am sorry if I seem to be prying [...] But you will be fine?’ ‘Dr Williams says things are all right for now, but I need more tests.’ [...] ‘But I do not understand. You appear to me to be strong.’ [...] I look at Solomon, who now seems somewhat embarrassed that he has raised the subject, and we fall into silence [...] ‘That’s enough about me,’ I say, trying to strike a lighter tone. ‘If you say so.’ ‘I do, I do.’ Here’s the moment that I’ve been hoping for. An opening into which I can place my own question. ‘But what about you, Solomon? I hardly know anything about you.’ I look across at him, and he suddenly seems very tired [...] He smiles nervously in my direction, as though apologising for his inability to answer my question. But it does not matter. (33-34)

Dorothy and Gabriel/Solomon approach each other with caution. Gabriel/Solomon’s questions echo those posed to Dorothy by the landlord at the Waterman’s Arms. However, whereas the landlord’s enquiries showed a sense of entitlement³⁸, Gabriel/Solomon

³⁸ The landlord’s questions are phrased as statements of facts followed by a voiced expectation of Dorothy’s confirmation. E.g. ‘You’ve got a doctor there, right?’ (8), ‘You’ve lived around these parts all your life, haven’t you?’ (10).

approaches the subject of Dorothy's illness carefully and respectfully. He offers her the possibility of demarcating her personal boundaries; in Dorothy's words, he is "allowing [her] space" (31-32). In a similarly hesitant fashion, Dorothy waits for an opening before posing her own question to Gabriel/Solomon. Dorothy's question is not specifically verbalised, but is formulated vaguely so that she leaves it to him what information he wishes to share with her: She asks merely: "What about you?". Theirs is a mindful and patient form of interaction that does not forcefully transgress personal boundaries. Significantly, "it does not matter" to Dorothy that Gabriel/Solomon remains silent and that this silence lingers between them. Their togetherness does not demand full disclosure, but allows an open space for that which cannot be communicated. Nonetheless, the contact zone is not a restful or harmonious site. Although the distance between the two protagonists is peaceful in its quiet recognition and acceptance of difference, it also inevitably engenders misinterpretations and insecurities. Accordingly, Gabriel/Solomon observes that Dorothy "appear[s]" to be strong. His observation contradicts what is known to the reader; namely that Dorothy is, in fact, fragile and on the verge of a breakdown. In a similar vein, Dorothy ponders that she "hardly know[s] anything" about her neighbour. The silences and gaps convey that, although both characters sense their loneliness reflected in the other, this intuited common ground is not the equivalent of explicit knowledge or of a privileged insight. For all of their mutual trust and amity, Dorothy and Gabriel/Solomon remain "strangers to each other" (14). As John McLeod considers, their connection is one that recognises "the limits of the threshold; that engenders compassion while admitting the blindness and insight of one's standpoint; one that neither calcifies nor liquidates difference in the contact zone of intercultural encounter" (McLeod, 2011, p. 12). In spite of its transience and limitations, their small network of two exhibits one of the central qualities of Bauman's 'community of our dreams'. Their mutual, though limited, understanding is tacit and unmediated, a source of safety and contentment. In contrast to 'the really existing community' of old Weston, which claims permanence and coerces homogeneity, their connection begs an empathetic and ethical engagement to continuously establish transient moments of common ground.

Gabriel/Solomon's death and Dorothy's institutionalisation might result in a reading of *A Distant Shore* as representative of a bleak outlook as to the possibilities of bridging the divide between the old village and the new development, an insular bordered (national) community

and an emergent reality of global networks. The allegorical community of Weston remains a fragmented site and a perilous place for those who fail to blend in. The ethical and empathetic cultural encounter between strangers thus seems a tenuous relation predestined to fail in the face of a dominant myth of uniformity. However, I contend that *A Distant Shore* does, in fact, offer a tentatively hopeful vision of the future.

After Gabriel/Solomon's death, Dorothy re-enters the Waterman's Arms and the landlord attempts to engage her in a conversation designed to clear the villagers of any suspicion of involvement with the murder:

'I'm sorry for what it's doing to our village.' 'What it's doing to the village?' [...] 'Well, it makes us look bad, doesn't it? [...] it must have been an accident because there's nobody in Weston who would do anything like that.' 'I see.' He looks over his shoulder at the other men in the pub. Now I understand. This is not a private conversation. 'If you've lived as long as I have, love, and you've grown up with folks like these, you'd understand that there's not one among them capable of harming anybody. That's just how they are. Decent folk committed to their families and their community.' (48-49)

The landlord's description of the local village as a peaceful site seems to iterate Bauman's descriptions of the mythical 'community of our dreams'. According to the landlord, the villagers have "grown up" together and therefore, through a lifelong transparent affiliation, have gained a profound "understanding" of the other members of the community. He 'knows' them to be a harmless group whose innate decency and commitment to the welfare of the community are presented as incontrovertible truths. He casts the community as a closely-knit entity that precludes violent or coercive behaviour.³⁹ However, the way in which the landlord frames what is, in fact, a public statement of his own allegiances is highly ambiguous. Paradoxically, he speaks of "our village", identifying himself as a member of the community he describes, while also rhetorically distancing himself from "these people". There is in his formulation a schizophrenic confusion of attachment to and disengagement from the local community. The ambiguous rhetoric contests his previous invocation of a unified hamlet.

³⁹ Cindy Gabrielle offers a related postcolonial reading of *A Distant Shore* wherein she discusses "the civilized pretence" maintained by English people, allegorically represented through the cast of local villagers in Weston, and "the falling apart of this deceitful posture in the face of immigration" (Gabrielle, 2012, p. 309). See: Cindy Gabrielle, "The Civilized Pretence. –Caryl Phillips and *A Distant Shore*".

Certainly, the landlord's perturbed body language, his glance over the shoulder, reveals that it is not only newcomers who are subjected to the 'neighbourly' supervision and regulation. Even this 'natural' insider feels the need to state his membership and his loyalty. Whereas in Bauman's 'community of our dreams' affinity is tacit, in 'the really existing community' of Weston it must be continually and publicly declared.

It is remarkable that Dorothy rephrases the landlord's proprietorial "our village" to a more neutral "the village". Her alternative phrasing infers her own strategic disengagement. She untangles herself rhetorically from the Weston community. As was the case during Dorothy's first encounter with the landlord, he offers her something on the house: "He rips open a packet of crisps and offers the bag to [Dorothy]" (49). This time, however, Dorothy declines his offering. If during their initial encounter, her acceptance of the 'welcome'-pint established a contractual bond between the landlord and herself, her refusal here constitutes a renunciation of any such link.

Furthermore, Dorothy exposes what the landlord vigorously attempts to silence when she pins one of the villagers' "abusive" letters to Solomon onto the noticeboard in the pub (63). The opened letter is deliberately disclosed in the 'public house' where communal affinities are performed and policed. Its "ugly" contents (292) serve as a material testament to the landlord's misleading representation of the community as a place of decency and conviviality. They uncover incivility and violence within the community itself, not deriving from a disruptive foreign presence. Dorothy's posting of the letter serves as a public statement that divulges Weston's hidden history; namely, the story of an ailing community that has failed to come to terms with a changing reality, a 'new development'. Dorothy understands that the villagers do not "care about anybody apart from their stupid selves" (59). She knows that their sense of "commitment" does not extend beyond the rigid limits of the old hamlet. The community that she hoped would offer her a new beginning and a dwelling place transforms in her mind at this realisation. The village is no longer perceived as a desired point of attachment, but as a place wherefrom she seeks to escape. She feels that "there's no way that [she] can live among these people" (59). Her phrasing is, of course, ambiguous, simultaneously hinting at her immutable status as an outsider in the eyes of the locals and at her longing to leave Weston behind. At the realisation that the community of her dreams is, in fact, an imagined site Dorothy loses her single remaining point of attachment and adds to her deteriorating mental condition. Yet, in spite of its devastating effects, the realisation may be

understood also as a moment of release. It facilitates a final letting go of the unattainable community of her dreams. At the end of the novel, there is a significant shift to be traced in Dorothy's mode of orientation:

When I look back at my life, only now do I realise that I've thrown away hundreds of days thinking that I could always reclaim them. But sadly, I now know that this is not the case. There are things to be done. Solomon must have a family [...] They'll be living in pain for ever, unless I go and help them [...] Telling them all the facts is the decent thing to do. It's compassionate. It gives them a chance to heal. (308)

As we have seen, Dorothy's narrative was at its beginning compulsively interrupted and fragmented by constant recollections of the past. Here, however, her narration reveals a purposeful reorientation towards the present as well as the future, which is emphasised by her repetitive use of the word "now". A desire to seek out unknown territory in the search for Gabriel/Solomon's family has replaced her desire for a homecoming to an imagined community. Thus, although at the end of *A Distant Shore* Dorothy's "heart remains a desert" (312), her mental condition still fragile and her future uncertain, there is a tenuous expectation of healing and new possibilities. The ending of the novel is highly ambiguous. It leaves Weston and Dorothy at the moment of collapse; the potential of future healing is open, but equivocal. The disruptive outside presence, Gabriel/Solomon the migrant, has been physically eliminated from community, but the effects of his stopover linger unresolved – what will the villagers' response be to Dorothy's disclosure of their ugly letter in the pub? Will the allegorical community recognise and admit inner discord and difference, thus relinquishing bounded conceptions of identity and belonging in a world of networks that cut across borders? Or will the pressure be on to sustain the myth of unity and sameness by a further intensification of coercion and border control?

Ledent's analysis focuses on the "political subtext" (Ledent, 2004, p. 158) of *A Distant Shore* and sees the novel primarily as a critical statement as to the xenophobic atmosphere in a backward England. It looks at the enduring divisions of "class and race" that inform conceptions of "Englishness" (ibid.). From this vantage point, the novel appears as a literary project to "assert the presence of the 'other' in contemporary British society" and to "reimagine England as a "visibly multicultural" nation (Ledent, 2004, pp. 157-158). Yet,

Ledent also hints at a potentially global context within which *A Distant Shore* might be read. She notes that the divided village of Weston may also be understood as an allegory of “the world in miniature” (Ledent, 2004, p.157). This global reading is highly relevant considering the deliberate juxtaposition of Dorothy and Gabriel/Solomon’s narratives, which serves to establish the role not only of the newcomer Gabriel/Solomon, but also of the Englishwoman Dorothy as strangers and outsiders in England. In the allegorical microcosm of the world every character is, in different ways, a stranger who has been dealt “an ambiguous hand” (Phillips, 2002, p. 4) of multivalent or conflicting attachments. This global context enables us to conceive of Dorothy and Gabriel/Solomon’s intersecting stories as a single, wider narrative of an increasingly globalised world order that introduces migrancy, a being-away-from-home, as a general condition. In Phillips’ allegorical “world in miniature”, bordered conceptions of being-in-the-world are challenged by expansive global networks that cut across the boundaries of the world. This crisis of the traditionally bordered community is portrayed through the individual stories of Dorothy and Gabriel/Solomon. It is from their close-up narratives and personal encounters that the reader pieces together a sense of their surrounding environment and social reality: A world peopled by strangers and misfits where community is under increasing pressure to sustain the myth of homogeneity and permanence by a radical policing of its boundaries.

On the level of phenomenological experience globalisation manifests, to Dorothy and Gabriel/Solomon, as a collapse of familiar structures and as a resultant state of being-away-from-home. The coherence of community depends upon complete conformity, transparency, and understanding between its members. Dorothy and Gabriel/Solomon’s affiliations are obscure and they carry a hidden history that disengages them from the safety and togetherness of this kind of community. We remember from chapter one Amartya Sen’s theorisation of how the dismantling of communitarian discourses furthers individual freedom of choice; it facilitates an understanding of identity and belonging in terms of multivalent and strategic affiliations to shifting networks. Significantly, however, the narratives of Dorothy and Gabriel/Solomon contest Sen’s celebrative vision. For them excommunication produces a deep existential crisis. They do not embrace migrancy as a state of unlimited freedom of movement. Indeed, they seek to alleviate their disengagement by establishing alternative ties which may serve as orientational markers and reinstate a stable sense of self. Their networking efforts are not informed by individual “freedom of choice” or by strategic

affiliations based on “reason” (see chapter one). For Dorothy and Gabriel/Solomon the opportunities to connect with people and places are few and far between, and the ties they do establish develop from coincidental encounters rather than from ‘reasoned’ selection.

In the literary world of *A Distant Shore* where every character is in one sense or another out-of-place and in transit, the uncompromising attachment and permanence of community remain out of reach. The network offers the only remaining possibility for these ‘global migrants’ to connect. The network provides a kind of embeddedness, albeit one that is inherently different from the unequivocal belonging promised by the ‘community of their dreams’. The connections established by the characters in *A Distant Shore* are thus transient and volatile. They are also characterised by limited understanding and by the risk of abandonment. However, unlike community, the network is expansive rather than bordered and thus allows for togetherness across difference.

3.2. In the Thick of It. Transient Entanglements in *In the Falling Snow*.

The central storyline of *In the Falling Snow* follows a few weeks in the life of Keith Gordon. Keith is forty-seven years old and works as a community liaison officer with the local authority in contemporary London. He is separated from his wife Annabelle with whom he has a seventeen-year-old son, Laurie. He has a relationship with an employee, Yvette. When Keith ends the relationship, Yvette claims harassment and he is compelled to take a leave of absence. During his time away from work Keith works on a book about “contemporary music” (63). He also briefly befriends a young Polish immigrant, Danuta. Whereas *A Distant Shore* is set primarily in the invented village of Weston, *In the Falling Snow* is set in London. Thus, our focus shifts now from a provincial to a metropolitan setting, from the context of an insular community to a global hub. *In the Falling Snow* enlarges a brief moment in Keith’s life and, in doing so, offers a close-up of the global metropolis of London as Keith experiences it at a very particular point in time.

Like *A Distant Shore*, *In the Falling Snow* combines its topical close-up with formal narrative techniques which produce a textual zooming-in effect. *In the Falling Snow* is, like *A Distant Shore*, divided into five parts and in this sense a novel in fragments. However, whereas in *A Distant Shore* the division signals shifts in narrative focus and style, as well as temporal and geographical context, the style, setting, and storyline of *In the Falling Snow* are transferred from each part to the next. The structure is reminiscent of the theatrical effect when players on a stage freeze in position between acts: The characters in *In the Falling Snow* seem to hold the pose between parts before plot development is once again set in motion. The result is aposiopetic; it interrupts narrative flow and coherence, inducing a sense of artificiality and stunted progression. This structure iterates the fragmentary logic of the close-up: It breaks the overall narrative into smaller, separate units and thus complicates our reading of the novel as a unity or a whole.

The 3rd person narration is centred on Keith’s point of view. It reports on his surrounding environment and on his movements in intense detail. It incorporates analeptic sequences when Keith recalls events from his past. It also includes extensive ‘proleptic’ or anticipatory passages, in which Keith attempts to predict the outcome of yet unperformed

actions.⁴⁰ Paul Collier describes the formal setup of the novel as a “recollective architecture” (Collier, 2012, p. 384), referring to the way in which the narrative circles from the present into associative recollections of the past and back again. The numerous instances when the narrating voice turns toward hypothetical future events, however, challenge such a solely retrospective characterisation. Indeed, Keith’s orientation towards hypothetical futures builds up suspense and keeps the reader guessing, along with Keith, as to what might happen next. In most instances these anticipations come to nothing, and the continuous formation of suspense without release accentuates the feel of stunted progression in the novel. The descriptive and circuitous style, which is suspended between the past and the future, stretches out the reader’s sense of time. It generates the impression that the narrative all but stagnates so that the storyline progresses in slow motion. This elongation, or enlargement, of the moment reflects a narrative zooming-in that offers a detailed insight into Keith’s consciousness. It provides a close-up of Keith’s state of mind at a particular point in time.

Collier writes about Phillips’ use of 3rd person narration in *In the Falling Snow* that it creates “an almost serenely neutral style beneath which some kind of animus and some kind of detached subjectivity flows” (Collier, 2012, p. 376). Indeed, there is a concurrent distance and proximity between the protagonist and the narrating voice, between the figural consciousness and the medium through which it is represented. This dualism is achieved through the style of ‘narrated interior monologue’ which renders Keith’s thoughts and emotions in his “own idiomatic discourse while maintaining the third person reference” (Cohn, 1978, p. 100). The narrated monologue “casts the language of the subjective mind into the grammar of objective narration” (Cohn, 1978, p. 120). Collier notes that this narrative mode creates a “dispassionate” and “affectless” feel (Collier, 2012, pp. 377, 379), as it positions the protagonist –and the reader– at an emotional distance from the narrative. I propose that the effect is, in fact, the opposite; that the subjective point of view, presented as if it were objective, amplifies emotional notes in the sense that the idiosyncratic expression of Keith’s subjective consciousness is elevated to the status of fact. In other words, Keith reads his environment with no analytical distance to what he observes. His personal perspective dominates the narrative to the point of being mistaken for a neutral recording of factual

⁴⁰ See Shlomith Rimmon-Kenan, *Narrative Fiction: Contemporary Poetics*, pp. 46-48.

information. This ambiguous narrating voice obfuscates the boundary between inside and outside. It blurs distinctions between personal and impartial reports, between reliable and unreliable narration. Like the close-up, the narrative style hints at, yet never discloses, the ‘big picture’ outside the frame of Keith’s subjective representations. *In the Falling Snow* thus filters its narrative through a highly contracted perspective: It zooms in on a very particular location at a specific moment in time as it is experienced by Keith.

This moment is characterised by his problematic relationships with his father Earl and his son Laurie. Keith struggles to navigate the generational gaps because he fails to recognise that they signal three different experiences. He imagines that a “black cultural heritage is passed on from one generation to the next” (91) and therefore believes that his own experience as a black Briton can be transferred directly onto Earl and Laurie. He believes that the three of them are ‘coming from the same place’ and speak from the same position. He does not consider that Earl’s migrant experience differs in significant ways from his own ‘second generation’ experience. He also neglects the fact that both the migrant and the second generation migrant experiences are, in turn, different from the experience of Laurie, who is fully at home in the global city of London.

My further analysis of *In the Falling Snow* takes as its point of departure the individual experiences of Earl, Keith, and Laurie, respectively. Ledent suggests that these three protagonists may be read allegorically as personifications of three “different existential states”; namely, “migrant, diasporic, and global” modes of being-in-the-world (Ledent, 2014, p. 165). I take up Ledent’s idea of a tripartite reading as I examine how Keith’s interactions with Earl and Laurie demonstrate that the three generations represent three distinct strategies for navigating the (social) environment and three different modes of being-in-the-world. I argue that these generational differences are symptomatic of a changing world wherein the “colonial or postcolonial model has collapsed” (Phillips, 2002, p. 5) as an all-encompassing model due to the restructurations of a new global order. I examine the character of Earl as a colonial subject who migrates from the periphery to the centre of empire. I consider that Keith embodies a postcolonial experience of ambivalence. He is both “of, and not of,” (Phillips, 2002) his native England, where enduring colonial legacies deny him full membership to the national community. Meanwhile, I read Laurie as a global subject. His sense of identity and

belonging reverts past models by way of a de-territorialised and networked perspective. Accordingly, *In the Falling Snow* envisions a trajectory from a colonial to a global order as epitomised by the individual experiences of three generations of black Britons.

“Play the stranger”.

Towards the end of *In the Falling Snow* Keith’s narrated monologue is interrupted by a 1st person monologue narrated by Earl. Earl is in the hospital where he recuperates from a heart attack. When Keith comes to visit him, Earl tells his son about his arrival in England in 1960 as a West Indian immigrant of the post-Windrush generation. Earl’s monologue flows over thirty-nine pages (248-261, 265-275, 277-293), interrupted only briefly on two occasions when he falls asleep and, when he awakes, it is immediately taken up from where he left off. Following upon Keith’s descriptive and scrutinising narration in the rest of the novel, the sudden absence of his idiom is palpable. It suggests that Keith sets aside personal judgement in order to listen intently and openly to his father’s story. The Standard English of the novel is briefly intervened by the creole voice that intones Earl’s perspective. Significantly, Collier points out, the creole grammar elides “the boundary between present-tense experience and past-tense recollection; everything here is ‘present’” (Collier, 2012, p. 398). This distinct narrative style thus brings the past into the present through linguistic transposition. It serves as an intimation of the full extent to which Earl’s past continues to define his outlook. Earl is, in this sense, a man of his time. His perspective is determined by his personal experience and by the social and political environment that informed it.

Earl speaks to Keith about his desire to return to the Caribbean:

‘This is no time to rest. Me, I want to go home.’ ‘Home? Maybe in a few weeks, but what are you going to do there by yourself? You know it doesn’t make any sense to be living all alone in that house.’ ‘You don’t understand me, Keith [...] I want to go home, Keith. I don’t mean to some stupid English house. I mean home. Home, home.’ His father stares up at him. ‘You understanding what I mean? I’m not from here. (248)

This passage conveys a poignant moment of miscommunication between Keith and Earl, and effectively illustrates a defining generational divide between them. Earl insistently repeats the word “home” in order to get his point across until, eventually, he uncovers the source of their

misunderstanding and tries a different approach, telling Keith explicitly “I’m not from here”. Whereas Keith is “born in Britain and [has] no memory of any kind of tropical life” (42), England remains to Earl a foreign country and he a stranger far from home. Keith associates Earl’s reference to “home” with his “English house”. For Earl, however, “home” is the West Indian island he left behind in 1960.

Accordingly, though intimately linked through bloodlines, Earl and Keith speak from two fundamentally different positions. When Earl tells Keith, “you don’t understand me”, he does not merely refer to a situational failure to communicate clearly what he means when he speaks of “home”. Earl implies also a more profound cleft produced by his and Keith’s dissimilar ideas as to the location of home and their distinct relationships to England. Since the two of them have never before talked about Earl’s early life or of the Caribbean, Keith cannot possibly “understand” where his father is coming from. Keith’s mother died when he was six. He remembers her only as the “slender lady” (168, 204, 207), a term of phrase that suggests a distanced association; and his relationship with Earl is similarly detached. Keith refers to his interactions with his father as “dealings” (52) which attests to their business-like, impersonal affiliation. After a lifetime of “almost total silence” (171) between them, Earl remains an “unpredictable man” (52) and a “mystery” (171) to his son. Earl is like “a stranger to him” (83) and their relationship consists of a mutual effort to “keep out of each other’s way” (178). Keith therefore has no tangible link to the part of his past that informs his experience as a black man in a xenophobic Britain. The bloodlines that connect him to his “black cultural heritage” (91) are characterised by estrangement rather than close familiarity.

By contrast, Earl’s monologue conveys his deep and experiential attachment to the Caribbean. This direct link is presented through Earl’s extensive use of sensory imagery: In his West Indian “village”, “the sound of the sea” provides an ever-present backdrop (258). He recalls the sound of the “waves lapping up the wooden pier”; “the rush of the wind passing through the leaves of the palm trees” (254); “no light coming from neither moon nor streetlamp” (256); “the taste of grafted mango”; and the “smell of saltfish frying” (270). Earl’s home appears as an almost pre-industrial realm. The soothing natural sounds, and the tastes and smells of local specialties create a provincial, convivial atmosphere. The sensory imagery brings Earl’s now temporally and geographically distant home into close proximity by evoking an almost corporeal feel for the place. To this particular location of home,

however, there can be no return. It is but a location in Earl's mind and is accessible only through his acts of remembering.

Earl's arrival in England in 1960 is a stark contrast to the serenity of the Caribbean island. Indeed, it is "a big shock to [his] system" (249). The sensory imagery that presented home in peaceful terms is juxtaposed by an equally sensory but jarring impression of London where "the lights from Piccadilly Circus burn [his] eyes and make [him] feel giddy" (251); "double-decker buses choking up everywhere"; and "all the people" are "rushing about" (252). Whereas Earl feels at ease in his Caribbean village, his encounter with the English metropolis is an unsettling experience, symbolically presented as an assault on his senses by the jolting sounds and sights of the city. The juxtaposition of the rural West Indian village and the noisy, fast-paced, and industrial capital emphasises geographical and cultural distances between the two locations. It presents these different sites as being worlds apart and therein hints at a fundamental division between the imperial centre and its colonial periphery at the time of Earl's migration.

Earl thought that he would find in England the same "type of white men [as] back home wearing club blazer and tie and walking about the place ramrod straight" (249). In his imagination, England is a place of wealth and privilege, a promised land where it is possible for the immigrant "to make life better" (184) for himself. Yet, rather than studying to become a lawyer, as was his "dream" (253), Earl finds work as a factory worker, and later as a janitor at a university. His encounter with the English educational system is comprised only by his "sweeping lecture halls, and cleaning blackboards and emptying dustbins" (246). He is relegated to the periphery in metaphorical terms as he ensures the continual maintenance of these halls of privilege for the convenience and comfort of the students. The reality of England clashes with Earl's anticipation that he would find there the opportunity to ascend the social ladder and enjoy the affluence of the middle-classes.

Instead of high-society men and women, the England he meets upon arrival is peopled by "scruffy white men" (251) in "dirty clothes" (249) who labour at the docks. Certainly, Earl's deepening state of "shock" is induced by the incongruity between his expectations to England as a place of privilege and its bleaker reality as a place of austere racial and social divides. The "hurting in [his] head", the first symptom of his imminent psychological breakdown, began at this moment when "what [he was] looking down upon

don't make no sense" (251). He attempts and fails to make sense of, or to navigate, the reality of England by reference to what proves to be an inaccurate inner map. Suggestively, Earl feels "the cold invading [his] body" (249) and since that first arrival he is invariably "cold" (164, 174, 271) – the harsh weather amplifying the sense that he finds himself in an unforgiving environment. Earl is, quite clearly, not 'at home' in England. Indeed, England is hostile, even life-threatening, territory. Earl recalls the slogan of far-right organisations to "Keep Britain White" and the permanent threat of falling victim to race motivated violence, openly referred to by the offenders in disturbingly jovial terms as an entertaining pastime of "nigger hunting" (272). The colonial immigrant is an unwelcome threat to the myth of a racially and culturally uniform nation, one that must be eliminated. Thus, Earl knows that, while the English "like to talk big about the importance of empire" and call him "brother" (ibid.), the familial rhetoric masks the fact that, when faced with the reality of colonial immigration, the English "don't care much for the foreigner" whom they regard as a "savage" they must "educate and civilise" (250). The supposedly close connection between the Mother country and her "sons of Empire" (184) is, in practice, a distancing and hierarchical one. The foreigner is welcomed only "as a last resort if no Englishman will work for such low wages" (272). Earl is tolerated as a necessary component that facilitates the smooth running of the machinery of late empire.

In "The Fact of Blackness" Frantz Fanon critiques what he considers to be the 'objecthood' of black men. He describes the psychological effects of being positioned by "the white gaze" and denied agency. An incident on a train becomes the catalyst of this chapter in his book, *Black Skin, White Masks* (1952): A small white child sees Fanon and points him out: "Look, a Negro!", "Mama, see the Negro! I'm frightened!" Fanon describes how this incident infuses him with a feeling of being "unmercifully imprisoned" (Fanon, 2008, p. 112) by the white man and by what he calls the 'historicity' of colonial (mis)representations which position the black man as 'other'. Through this alienating perspective, Fanon writes, he "discovered [his] blackness, [his] ethnic characteristics; [he] was battered down by tom-toms, cannibalism, intellectual deficiency, fetishism, racial defects, slave-ships" (ibid.). To retain agency in the face of uncompromising colour prejudice, Fanon "take[s] up" his "negritude", his blackness as 'otherness' (Fanon, 2008, p. 106). He strategically accepts the absolute signifier of race and claims belonging to "a bitter brotherhood" (Fanon, 2008, p. 94) of 'others'. In a similar fashion, it is only when Earl arrives in England that he becomes self-conscious of his

blackness, of being a black man “in a sea of white faces” (250). His close encounter with the white gaze induces his alienation. In a Fanonian manoeuvre, to set a xenophobic national community at ease and “make them feel better” (ibid.), Earl’s generation of black men in Britain play into racial stereotypes:

What you must to is play the stranger because it make [the English] feel better; play the part of the stranger and nod and smile when they ask you if you know what is a toilet, or if you ever see running water coming from a tap. Look upon their foolishness like a game you winning and the stupid people don’t even know that you busy scoring points off their ignorance. Play the damn stranger and you can win in England (250)

Earl has a “British passport” (251) and has the official right to claim an intimate attachment to the imperial heartland through “Commonwealth migration” (275). Yet, he deliberately positions himself as an outsider. The term “stranger” in the quote above potently refutes familiarity. By actively assuming a peripheral position, Earl and his generation of black immigrants strategically cast themselves as a temporary, extraneous presence. In the role of foreigners, rather than British subjects, they cannot lay claim, and therefore do not pose a serious threat, to the supposedly uncontaminated racial purity of the mythically white national community. Earl’s generation of West Indian immigrants emphasise difference and disengagement from England; as one of Earl’s long-time mates sums up their situation, “I had enough. They don’t want me, then I don’t want them” (243). Notably, Keith repeatedly calls attention to Earl’s “pork-pie hat” which his father “always wears on stepping outside his house” (120, 165, 176, 182). The pork-pie hat was an integral part of the 1960s *rudeboy* ‘uniform’, paying homage to American jazz and soul musicians of the same period. His hat inevitably invokes a black subculture which in the UK positioned itself in opposition to a white mainstream community. Arguably, the pork-pie hat thus serves as an attribute of Earl’s affiliation with a specifically black community of outsiders in England.

With its focus on the power of cross-cultural networks, freedom of movement and exchange across borders, and multivalent, transient attachments, globalisation theory cannot capture Earl’s highly bordered and colonial experience. For Earl, home is left behind and can be reached only through a retrospective invocation of the time before he left the Caribbean for England. It cannot be recreated elsewhere through deliberate acts of networking. Seeing Earl

and his mates playing dominoes, Keith is amused to find that they still [...] revel with what he imagines to be the spirit of their Caribbean youth” (175). Such moments of conviviality at first glance suggest that an auxiliary home has, in fact, been established among these West Indian men of the post-Windrush generation; that Earl has reconstructed a sense of being-at-home as part of this network of exiles in England. However, Earl’s lingering desire to return “home” to the West Indies testifies to his ongoing displacement. Whereas globalisation theory examines home, identity, and belonging as concepts which are in the process of becoming increasingly fluid and ephemeral, Earl’s conception of home is invariably concrete and territorial: It lies in the specific location of his West Indian village. Collier observes that “Earl’s account of his traumatic arrival in England matches up in every respect to the now classic accounts we are familiar with from Sam Selvon, George Lamming, and V.S. Naipul” (Collier, 2012, p. 398). This embedded intertextuality with now canonical colonial narratives positions Earl’s experience squarely within a particular point in time and within a specific cultural and political context. The segregationist rhetoric that permeates the England of the 1960s is an integral part of the European imperial legacy as it has been theorised by prominent theorists such as Stuart Hall and Paul Gilroy.⁴¹ Earl’s life-story is a recognisably (post)colonial narrative that captures the paradoxical relationship between empire and colony, the defamiliarising effects of ‘othering’, and the experience of the colonial subject who journeys from the periphery to the centre of empire.

From Earl’s narrative, a social and political environment emerges that recalls Hardt & Negri’s theorisation of how European imperialism “constructed a Leviathan that overarched its social domain and imposed hierarchical territorial boundaries, both to police the purity of its own identity and to exclude all that was other” (see chapter one). Where Earl crosses the physical border into England, he encounters a social space that vigorously polices its conceptual borders so as to safeguard the supposedly uncontaminated racial purity of the nation. His movements within this bordered space are highly restricted. The conceptual barriers of (the national) community are unambiguous and his disengagement from England is predetermined by his racial difference. The colour of his skin and his immigrant status are

⁴¹ See for example Stuart Hall, “Thinking the Diaspora: Home-Thoughts from Abroad”, 1999; Paul Gilroy, “There Ain’t No Black in the Union Jack. The cultural politics of race and nation” (1987).

absolute determinants of his attachment to and affiliation with home in another place, in spite of more than forty years of living in England.

Nonetheless, Earl and his generation of colonial immigrants represent the early beginnings of contemporary mass-migration. Their migrations set off an escalating number of newcomers in England who cannot conform to communal demands of uniformity and transparent, unambiguous ties. Their presence in Britain signifies a growing need to establish new ways of thinking about identity in an increasingly global order which has shifted the boundaries of community. The struggle to create and realise new visions of belonging was, however, left to the 'second generation' who had "no memory of any kind of tropical life before England" (42) and therefore no other place to call home.

"Looking across the Atlantic"

I have examined above the character of Earl as a subject-in-context, a man of his time and a representative of the colonial migrant experience. Correspondingly, I consider the character of Keith as a product of the particular political and social context that informed his growing-up and coming of age in the 1970s, and 80s. At this point in time, the lasting effects of colonial migration have altered the racial, cultural, and demographical make-up of the nation. For Keith's generation, previously unambiguous distinctions between centres and peripheries, sameness and difference, self and other are becoming increasingly blurred.

Earl's creole narration is emblematic of his absolute affiliation with his West Indian home. So, too, can we extract from Keith's narrative style the contours of his personal attachments to place and community. The initial paragraphs of the novel provide an illustrative example that conveys Keith's subject position as being simultaneously 'of and not of' England:

He is walking in one of those leafy suburbs of London where the presence of a man like him still attracts curious half-glances. His jacket and tie encourage a few of the passers-by to relax a little, but he can see that others are actively suppressing the urge to cross the road. It is painfully clear that, as far as some people are concerned, he simply doesn't belong in this part of the city. As he turns into Sutherland Road, he reaches up and peels off the dark glasses. There is no sun to speak of. (7)

Maufort writes that an examination of the subject's interaction with the physical environment can reveal important aspects as to his or her social reality (Maufort, 2014). Maufort tells us that the physical organisation of space is contingent upon social practices and that, in our critical readings of texts, the two should be considered in conjunction. Looking at textual moments that reflect Keith's orientations within the physical space of London, we discover his concurrent familiarity with and estrangement from the cityscape. When Keith walks through the streets of London that he knows so well, he feels he is being watched; an object of curiosity and suspicion in the eyes of passers-by. There is no prior information that might indicate why "a man like him" (7) should be attracting such particular attention. His jacket and tie constitute a recognisably middle-class English 'uniform' that seems to blend smoothly into the suburban landscape. Nor is it the sunglasses which, in the sunless "autumn" (ibid.), are admittedly out of place, that set him apart. Rather, what makes Keith stand out is a visible, intrinsic quality that "a man like him" carries. Keith sees this part of the city as hostile territory, noting that the streets are "less than friendly" (58). He feels "the wind rise" and "a chill ripple through his body"; he opens the gate to Yvette's town house and a "tightly coiled iron spring" causes it to "[swing] back into place"; he rings the bell which "sings out" with a "peal" and a "lingering echo" (7). He thus experiences his movements as resounding intrusions that disturb and unsettle the quiet suburbia. His tense alertness to the surrounding environment suggests that, oddly, in this seemingly peaceful suburb, he is ever on his guard. Keith's observations of how passers-by "relax a little", though they are also "actively suppressing the urge to cross the road", indicate either a formidable attentiveness to body language; or the more likely possibility that the "curious glances" he attracts are actually imagined.

Keith's self-conscious manoeuvres are coupled with a recurrent literary trope that punctuates the narrative: His line of thought is broken by a sudden awareness of his own reflection in the windows of buildings and trains⁴². During these moments he looks upon a mirror image of what the world around him will see, should their eyes alight on him. Through this alienating perspective Keith experiences himself as 'Other'. His unease keeps the reader engaged in an effort to deduct the source of his difference. It induces a particular consciousness on the part of the reader of textual indicators of difference and sameness.

⁴² See: Phillips, *In the Falling Snow*, 2009, pp. 17, 71, 131, 239.

Only much later does Keith disclose how Annabelle's father once repeated a neighbour's allusion to Annabelle as a "nigger-lover" (31). This recollection constitutes the first explicit reference to Keith's difference: He is a black man in a predominantly white suburban landscape. When he feels the weight of "curious half-glances", it is, in fact, an almost Fanonian moment of interpellation: Keith is "painfully" aware of the (imagined?) white gaze that positions him as a black man, a foreign and potentially subversive presence. Keith has thus inherited from his father's generation a world wherein blackness is still an absolute signifier of otherness and unbelonging. However, whereas Earl embraced his strangerhood, Keith takes a different approach. His middle-class attire, he believes, has a relaxing influence on apprehensive passers-by, becomes a marker of British civilisation and goes some way to counteract his 'dangerous' foreign nature. His attempt to blend into the cityscape recalls Homi Bhabha's concept of the 'mimic-man'. Bhabha theorises "colonial mimicry" as "the desire for a reformed, recognizable 'Other', as a subject of difference that is almost the same, but not quite" (Bhabha, 1994, p. 85). Mimicry in this sense refers to the imitation of white cultural and linguistic norms by colonials and immigrant minorities. It is a performative strategy of imitation that appropriates signifiers of power in order to access the power with which these signifiers are associated. By actively suppressing his racial difference through camouflage, Keith hopes to appropriate the white suburban space through which he moves.

The narrative mode of the novel conveys Keith's hypersensitivity towards ethnic signifiers in the urban landscape. Accordingly, as Keith looks at Yvette he observes that her "heritage is most evident in the battle between Europe and Africa that is being waged on her face where full lips and emerald green eyes compete for attention" (10). He classifies her in racial terms that conflate conceptions of race and culture. He sees her as an embodiment of two incongruous genetic configurations of black and white, represented by Europe and Africa, respectively. By presenting Europe as unvaryingly white and Africa as consistently black, it is implied that Keith sees the world as a space divided into culturally and racially specific communities. He surmises that Yvette "could easily pass for white", although her liking for "kente cloth scarves and wooden beads speaks eloquently to the fact that she has never tried to deny her mixed background" (ibid.). The formulation that Yvette might 'pass for' white establishes that she belongs to the opposite category of 'black' in Keith's view: A single

genetic marker, her full lips, is enough to determine her affiliation with a black heritage. In Keith's eyes, her accessories, her scarves and beads, are cultural and racial signifiers by which she actively performs her black identity. Since Keith attempts to downplay his own outsider status, he wonders at Yvette's deliberate enactment of her ethnic difference.

In this fashion, Keith reads his environment with reference to minute details which might hold racial or cultural significance. In a London cab Keith thus notices that the driver's "West African accent" and "lime green dashiki" makes his "attempt to speak cockney" seem "absurd" (98). By remarking upon the absurdity of this cultural and linguistic montage, he reveals a rigidly bounded notion of identity. From a black man who dresses in dashiki Keith expects an 'authentic' West African accent. The recognisably local cockney dialect destabilises a straightforward classification of the driver's origins. It suggests that the driver has obtained, at least, a partial membership to the English national community, thus complicating his affiliations. Collier shows how, by continually performing this careful monitoring of ethnic attributes, the narrative style of *In the Falling Snow* "gesture[s] at the racialization of surfaces" and challenges the reader to decipher "unarticulated codes" (Collier, 2012, pp. 380-381). This particular style suggests that Keith classifies identity with reference to clearly demarcated and dichotomous ethnic communities. Significantly, though he travels in racial and cultural stereotypes, the particular attribute that marks himself as an intruder in white suburbia remains curiously unspecified. This lack of specificity suggests that, in spite of his unambiguous classification of other people into a 'multicultural' assortment of separate ethnic groups, he remains uncertain as to his own position within this plethora of racially and culturally bordered communities. His outlook iterates those communitarian discourses much-criticised by Amartya Sen which generate the illusion that the world is "split into insular and clashing groups with divergent cultures and disparate histories that tend, in an almost 'natural' way, to breed enmity toward each other"⁴³.

In Keith's experience race is a signifier of inherent and absolute affiliations and therefore also of his disengagement from a mythically white English community. Arguably, his compulsive attention to racial stereotypes derives from his own experiences of being classified in precisely those terms. As was the case for Earl's generation of black men in Britain, race is a

⁴³ See chapter one

principal marker of identification. Indeed, there are strong similarities between the England of the 1960s that emerges from Earl's monologue and England during the 1970s and 1980s as it is remembered by Keith. Thus, Annabelle's parents, Mr and Mrs Johnson, and the place of her birth in the village of Wiltshire serve as representatives of an isolationist Britain. Wiltshire is recognisably rural, a place of "narrow country lanes that were walled on both sides by seemingly ancient bowed trees" (29). Attesting to its longstanding history and pedigree is a "neat billboard by the roadside" announcing that an archaeological dig has "unearthed evidence of pre-Roman settlement" (ibid.). Wiltshire is peopled by "women with their starched hair and silk scarves" and "men in blazers and slacks", a space characterised by middle-class uniformity (ibid.). Wiltshire carries a striking resemblance to the fictitious village of Weston in *A Distant Shore*, wherein life in the province serves a similar function as a metaphor for insular and outmoded conceptions of identity and belonging. Like Weston, Wiltshire is an epitome of English rural idyll that conceals a hostile policing of communal borders. Mr Johnson receives an anonymous letter, the contents of which echo with the letters that Gabriel/Solomon receives from local villagers in Weston: The letter asks that he does not "pollute" the supposedly uncontaminated racial pedigree of the white village with his "mongrel family" (28)⁴⁴. As in *A Distant Shore*, traditional community is depicted as a tribal space of (racial) conformity. Annabelle's father, Mr Johnson, acts a mouthpiece for this racial tribalism when he

demanded of [Keith] that he take responsibility for his people's 'ill-manners'. 'You're rather like the Irish aren't you, with loud voices that get on one's nerves and always protesting what exactly? Mind you, at least you people are not bombing civilians. Well, not yet.' When he tried to explain to Mr Johnson the frustrations of his generation, the man laughed in his face. (45)

Mr Johnson's rhetoric positions Keith as a representative of "his people". The vague reference represents a racialised mode of classification that obscures cultural and geographical complexities and indiscriminately categorises black people as a single overarching community, collectively characterised by a propensity for unfounded seditious behaviour. Mr Johnson presents Keith as the personification of a racial stereotype, an angry black man. Mr Johnson makes the arbitrary comparison of Keith's "people" to "the Irish" that seems to pool

⁴⁴ This discourse of mongrelisation iterates British post-war preoccupation with racial purity manifested in what Phillips has elsewhere termed the British "mythology of homogeneity" (Phillips, 1997, p. xiv).

all supposed ‘foreigners’ together. He considers these ‘foreigners’ in England as one group of violent ‘others’ who attack peaceful English “civilians” for no reason. Mr Johnson has no interest in historical or cultural particularities. He does not consider, for example, that whereas the Irish bombings of the 1970s and 1980s resulted from efforts to be acknowledged as distinct from England, the urban insurrections by black Britons were part of a struggle “to make a space for themselves in England” (42).

Earl’s generation of colonial immigrants appropriated absolutist conceptions of race and nationalism in a strategic manoeuvre to ‘play the stranger’. By contrast, Keith’s generation of black Britons rebel against the myth of a racially homogenous nation and envision new ways of thinking about identity and belonging. Denied a close affiliation with Britain, they “look across the Atlantic for [their] models” (91) to discover alternative forms of embeddedness.

Unlike his father, Keith has no lived connection to the Caribbean. Nonetheless, he emphasises an abstract connection to this unfamiliar location, the home of his father. To his mind, the Caribbean constitutes an “imaginary homeland” (203), a place of family origin. Meanwhile, he also identifies with black American culture, exemplified by his “passion” for “American soul music” (15). Indeed, Keith’s interest in music functions as a metaphor throughout the novel for his process of self-identification:

The first part of the book, ‘Motown and the Suburbs,’ will specifically concern itself with soul music, the middle section, ‘Rebel Music,’ will address itself to the rise of reggae as a global phenomenon, and the final third of the book ‘Whose World?’ will look at the implications, musically and culturally, of the emergence of so-called ‘World Music’ (63)

Soul emerged during the 1960s as a hybridization of African-American gospel and rhythm and blues, while reggae developed during the late 1960s and 70s influenced by the Caribbean mento and calypso genres. Soul and reggae are closely linked with the socio-political struggle for racial equality and are strongly associative of the “frustrations” of Keith’s generation of black people in Britain. Keith’s selection of genres combines music from the Caribbean, Africa, America, and Britain. The book recalls Paul Gilroy’s groundbreaking and seminal work *The Black Atlantic: Modernity and Double-Consciousness* (1993). Gilroy’s ‘black Atlantic’ is a theoretical endeavour to rethink the supposedly antagonistic categories of black and white as engaged in an irreversible process of cultural exchange and mutation. The ‘black

Atlantic’ as theorised by Gilroy constitutes a poly-culture that “face[s] (at least) two ways at once” as it encompasses both ‘European’ and ‘black’ affiliations simultaneously (Gilroy, 2002, p. 4). Keith’s book thus comes to epitomise a Gilroyan endeavour to move beyond the bordered conceptions of nation, race, and ethnicity as absolute categories. In his book these locations and cultures are brought together by “an explicitly transnational and intercultural perspective” (Gilroy, 2002, p. 15).

Keith’s project deliberately emphasises transnational and mutating points of attachment and thus, to some extent, invokes Amartya Sen’s theorisation of identity as a result of deliberate acts of networking. Indeed, Keith’s interest in the “global” spread of these particular musical genres signifies the idea of an expansive transnational network that cuts across national borders and geographical distances. Yet, his understanding of identity remains rooted in a premise of inherent ties to locality and culture that echoes with colonial conceptions of race. Paradoxically, the book envisions a polyculture that transcends absolute identity categories, yet remains single-mindedly focused on tracing a specifically “black cultural heritage” (91). It perpetuates, rather than dismantles, bordered discourses of race.

Abigail Ward reads Keith as a personification of an unwaveringly ‘black Atlantic’ experience. Ward traces the ways in which *In the Falling Snow* “reflects the lasting relationship between black America and black Britain” and sees this relationship primarily manifested in Keith’s “looking across the Atlantic for his models” (Ward, 2011, p. 297). In this view, Keith’s book about music is a metaphor for his discovery of the substantial connection he longs for, one which is “passed on from one generation to the next” (91). I find, however, that there are several reasons to contest the interpretation of Keith’s transatlantic dream as a successful endeavour. Keith ceaselessly immerses himself in ‘black music’ (he goes to concerts, plays consecutive tracks on jukeboxes in pubs, and ensures constant backdrop of music on the CD player in his flat) in what looks like a forced attempt to induce a particular mood that nonetheless continues to escape him. His recurrent endeavours to “reconfigure the structure of the book” (63) and his inability to make “any progress” (134) are similarly indicative of the failure of his black diasporic vision, which, as Ledent writes, has a “tendency to idealize or simplify the past and to cut him off from the reality around him” (Ledent, 2014, p. 170). It is no insignificant point that, in order to avoid “the hassle” of acquainting himself with the genres of jazz, gospel, and blues, which he “knows precious little about”, Keith simply leaves these genres out of his project although he “wondered if it was

even possible to write a book about contemporary music without including something about this tradition” (63). Keith’s “escapist endeavour” (Ledent, 2014, p. 170) abandons historical and cultural complexities in favour of a unifying vision. This vision provides a straightforward, though imagined, attachment to a hybrid, but essentially black, community. In my view, Keith’s difficulties in activating the otherwise solely theoretical engagement with a black cultural heritage speak to the limitations of his black Atlantic vision. They address the ambiguity of embracing the idea of a diasporic identity that characterises home not as a phenomenological dwelling-place, but as an abstraction. Furthermore, it is debatable whether a ‘deep’ and ‘substantial’ embeddedness can be genuinely recovered from what is, in fact, an abstract connection to an ‘imaginary’ homeland.

Keith’s abstract affiliation with a ‘black Atlantic’ counter-culture is complicated by his lived connection to a predominantly English middle-class experience. Whereas he has scant knowledge about his father’s West Indian homeland and history, he vividly recalls the English upbringing he received from Brenda, his father’s wife, who stressed “that good manners were important” (19):

There’s people out there, Keith, who think they’re better than you, but never mind what they say, they’re not. However, I’m not having you giving them some reason to think they are. Keep your chin up, love, your clothes nice and tidy, and your language decent, and you’ll be a credit to yourself and your mum and dad. Now get yourself off to school and mind you come back with As on that report card (ibid.)

Racism is stated as a fact of life and bullying as an inevitable recurrence while good manners and education are presented as means by which Keith subvert racist attitudes. Brenda promotes a strategy of mimicry not as mere imitation, but as a subversive and empowering performance that exposes the artificiality of racial stereotypes. As “one of the few black kids” (106) in a “white working-class estate” (189), he is encouraged to actively and continuously prove his worth by mimicking the conduct of another racial stereotype, namely the exemplary English student. On the job as a community liaison officer Keith goes to inspect Afro-Caribbean community centres. Here he feels the “discomfort of being the black guy with a suit and briefcase”, a “bald-head” in the midst of “dread-locked men” (300). With his suit and briefcase, Keith looks very similar to the men in the village of Wiltshire, the space which, as we have established above, appears as an epitome of a white national community. As such,

Keith is an outsider and a visitor to the black communities and not, as in his fantasy of a black transatlantic kinship, an inherent member. There is a notable incongruity between his theoretical identification with a specifically black heritage and his active suppression of racial difference.

Ironically, Keith often appears in the novel as a representative of England and ‘Englishness’. To Earl, for example, Keith is “like a true Englishman” because he is not “feeling the cold” (173) when walking outside in the November weather. If we recall Maufort’s assertion of the close connection between the physical and the social environment as a reading strategy, then Keith’s resilience to the harsh English climate takes on special significance as a metaphor for his more general familiarity with and belonging to England itself⁴⁵. Thus, Keith sees a group of exchange students who shield their faces in a downpour, and he wonders at “these foreigners” who ought to know “that it is always raining in England” and thus one should carry an umbrella at all times (87). He refers to “these foreigners” as a contrast to his own position of intimate local knowledge. The phrasing shows that, although Keith sees himself as a body-out-of-place, he also identifies other bodies in the cityscape which he recognises as being ‘stranger’ yet. In fact, when juxtaposed with these recent arrivals who are soaked from the rain, he, who otherwise feels like an outsider in England, becomes, by comparison, the native Englishman with superior local insight. The umbrella is to his mind “a key part of the English uniform” (*ibid.*), an emblem of Englishness; it is tangible evidence of familiarity with the unpredictable weather in England. It is therefore a significant moment when Keith encounters the young Polish immigrant Danuta and “hands her [his own] travel-size umbrella”. He shows her how she “can hang on to it like this and stop it from popping up” in the gale (94), and he “places her hand in the right position, then holds his own hand around hers to make sure that she has the correct grip” (*ibid.*). In metaphorical terms, Keith offers Danuta an ambiguous gift. On one hand, he assumes the role of a gracious host who helps his guest acquire what he considers to be a “key” skill for her successful future engagement with his familiar environment. He is, in this sense, the communal insider who hands her an emblem of membership. However, since the umbrella is part of an attire that Keith wears in order to signal ‘uniformity’, to suppress his own difference, his offering and careful instructions in its proper use constitute also a symbolical

⁴⁵ In a similar fashion, we recall that the English climate served a metaphorical function also in the case of Earl’s experience, invoking his estrangement from an unwelcoming country.

lesson in the importance of assimilation. It is a baton of mimicry handed down from one 'outsider' to another, an emblem of a racially and culturally bordered national community where membership is preconditioned by assimilation.

My reading of the character of Keith up till this point characterises him as a postcolonial subject. He is engaged in an active revision of colonial legacies that nonetheless continue to impact on his experience as a black Briton during the 1960s, 70s, and 80s. His ambivalent affiliation with both European and black communities situates him in a liminal subject position in-between cultures. His liminality evokes conceptions of cultural hybridity as they have been theorised by prominent postcolonial scholars, Bhabha and Gilroy in particular. Bhabha's theorisations of mimicry and ambivalence have provided the analysis with a useful framework for describing Keith's struggle to reconcile a dual allegiance to two seemingly antagonistic categories. Moreover, Keith's vision of a transnational, transcultural black community has been examined by reference Gilroy's idea of a 'black Atlantic', which promises yet fails to transcend the experience of liminality. I proceed to examine textual moments that cast into question the continued serviceability of Keith's postcolonial outlook in the age of globalisation. These moments expose Keith as an unreliable narrator who habitually misreads his environment. His misunderstandings arise because he reads his contemporary, global reality in the 2000s with reference to outmoded postcolonial models. An exaggerated focus on the legacies of the past impedes continual adaptation to the changing realities of his present and his future. The aim is to illustrate that, while a postcolonial mode of analysis enables significant insights, it must be coupled with a global reorientation of perspective to appreciate the full extent of the trajectory that the novel reflects on.

Let us turn first to the pivotal moment when a friend of Danuta, Rolf, appears "agitated" (193) on Keith's doorstep. He is looking for Danuta who has taken his wallet and disappeared. Rolf warns Keith that "Danuta uses men. She is not a respectable woman" (195). Rolf also says that she has exposed Keith to ridicule by telling "everybody at the language school that [he was] in love with her and also obsessed with some stupid book about music" (194). Prior to Rolf's arrival, Danuta is represented to the reader only as she appears to Keith, who sees her as the epitome of female naïveté. Keith finds her "face is strangely angelic" (65) and her name "romantic" (86). She seems to him "painfully young and liable to be exploited" (135), like a

girl who “remains untouched by life” (71). However, Rolf’s revelation that she has shrewdly manipulated both of them, and that, far from being ‘untouched by life’, she is both a wife and a mother with a husband and three children in Warsaw, clashes with Keith’s romanticised ideal of a young innocent girl. His umbrella gift suggests that he feels a sense of kinship with Danuta through an abstract fellowship between two outsiders in England. She, on the other hand, speaks about Keith in unambiguous terms as an Englishman, addressing him as “you English people” (97). His racial identity does not, in her eyes, imply estrangement from the nation. Keith imagines that due to a shared experience as outsiders “he understands” (76) Danuta’s situation, but in reality he fails to successfully read her motives. To her, England is a “stupid country with crazy rules” (67) where she lives temporarily in order to “learn English words” (ibid.). The latter qualifier, ‘words’, carries significant meaning because it contrasts with Keith’s longing for communal membership. Whereas Keith engages in assimilatory, self-regulating performances of ‘Englishness’ in order to assert ownership of Britain, Danuta is interested only in furthering her knowledge of the English language, the lingua franca that facilitates access to, and participation in, global networks. Juxtaposed with Keith’s emotive, though ambivalent, connection to the national community, Danuta’s interest in England is a practical one.

Keith notes that, although Danuta looks “Slavic” (65) with her “pale” skin (70) and “blonde hair” (65), her hair is dyed and conceals “dark brown” roots (69) underneath. Her paleness coupled with naturally dark hair complicates a straightforward classification of her genetic make-up according to racial stereotypes of fair-skinned, blond Poles. To Keith’s knowledge, “there is no surname” that might root her “French-sounding” name in “Polish soil” (86), which further obscures her origins and her cultural heritage. Keith imagines that “perhaps there is a small flat in Warsaw that she intends to return to, or maybe she has a clerical job waiting for her, or a junior university position” (68). His arbitrary listing of these three very different vocations, which are representative of the lower-, middle-, or upper-middle-classes, respectively, attests to her indeterminable position within social hierarchies. Her conflicting testimonies of “for sure, I will go back to Warsaw” (67) and “I do not have the money to go back” (137) complicate any clear definition of her (financial) freedom of movement. The first statement has an exterritorial ring that hints at an uncomplicated movement across the world’s border. The latter, however, bears a similarity to the character of Deniz in Dasgupta’s *Tokyo*

Cancelled who is stranded in a particular location because the passageways of privilege are inaccessible to her.

Phillips' Danuta carries significant resemblances to the 'heroes' in Dasgupta's novels. Like these archetypal tricksters, she personifies a new kind of migrant who falls outside bordered categories. She does not, as Keith believed, strive toward communal membership. She is not an uninitiated foreigner in need of his welcome or his guidance. Indeed, in a manner that calls to mind Khatuna's deliberate management of events in *Solo*, Danuta savvily manoeuvres within her environment and skilfully manipulates people and places for her personal gain. Keith misreads Danuta because he attempts to understand her point of departure and her motives with reference to his own experiences as an outsider. He seeks to understand her through narratives of communal belonging as he looks for markers of nationality, ethnicity, and class from which he might extract clues about her situation. However, Danuta cannot be classified with reference to absolute group affiliations. Her undecidability hints at the need for new frameworks for understanding the experiences of migrants in a global age. Such frameworks might usefully take a network approach as their point of departure. As we have seen in chapter one, the network approach emphasises individual, transient points of attachment. This focus on individual trajectories opens up new pathways for critical engagements with contemporary migration. It exposes a multitude of very different motivations for and experiences of being-away-from-home and may perhaps circumvent the tendency of communitarian discourses to simplify multivalent and often transitory attachments. To look at the individual subject as the centre of personal networks might avoid a Keith-like blindness towards the complexities of identity and belonging at a time of mass-migration on a global scale.

The moment when Rolf discloses Danuta's transgression exposes Keith as an unreliable narrator. It shows that Keith's narration does not reflect objective observations, but misinterpretations of people and places. This moment is of particular significance because it testifies to the unserviceability of Keith's outlook. It also shows that Keith navigates his (social) environment with reference to an inner map that is incongruous with his contemporary reality. It therefore implies the inadequacy of an exclusively postcolonial framework to grasp the complexities of an increasingly global order.

We remember that Keith's book project is a metaphor for his (postcolonial) outlook, symptomatic of his subject position within bounded racial and cultural communities. The structuring idea of the book therefore holds important clues as to the source of Keith's consequent misreadings of the world around him: The book arbitrarily maps the music of "the sixties, the seventies and the eighties" (63) as "contemporary music", although the styles it describes have long been succeeded by new genres. As we have seen, the book resects the prevalent genres of Earl's generation such as "jazz" and "gospel" (ibid.). It also discards the modern genres of "Indie" and "hip-hop" (16), which, albeit popular with Laurie's generation, "suggest to [Keith] not a new generation of music, but the evidence of a general cultural malaise" (ibid.). Paradoxically, while claiming to map "deep" lines of continuity, Keith's book thus incorporates only a narrow selection of musical genres based on his own personal take on what constitutes 'contemporary' music, presented out of context. The book is misguided in its conception because it mistakes a subjective close-up approach for an objective panoramic mapping. It seeks to extract from the fragment a cohesive view of the whole. In a similar manner, Keith sees the world from a personal perspective and out of context, yet fails to recognise the limitations of his outlook. He naively 'maps' his contemporary environment with reference to the dominant influences and identity discourses of his youth. His reluctance to engage in his book with the music of Laurie's generation hints at a more general failure on his part to adapt to present realities.

The circuitous and fragmented narrative style of *In the Falling Snow* thus works in conjunction with Keith's anachronistic outlook to convey an overall impression of stunted development. Indeed, the novel is punctuated by moments when Keith is, quite literally, frozen mid-movement⁴⁶ in deliberate attempts to "hold the pose" (114), a metaphorical gesture towards his inability to move forward. He does not "act his age" (101), but "shamelessly flirt[s] with young women" (198), "liv[es] without a daily structure", and has resumed "the indulgent sleeping patterns of his youth" (62). Keith does not recognise that he no longer represents the young generation. In other words, he fails to realise that the 'deep'

⁴⁶ E.g. "He is fully awake before he opens his eyes. He likes it this way, lying perfectly still in the dark and choosing not to move" (100); "The line goes dead, but he continues to hold the mobile to his ear. As long as he holds the pose there is still some communication between himself and Annabelle" (114); "he sits back in front of the screen, but his hands hover for he is still trying to decide whether or not to take a look at the offending website" (125); "He does not move off. He stands and stares across the village common at the row of Victorian terraces where Annabelle lives" (300).

lines of continuity for which he is searching extend not only into the past, but reach also into the future and foreshadow ongoing transformation.

“It’s got a lot to do with respect”.

Whereas *In the Falling Snow* gives distinctive voices to Earl and Keith, Laurie’s story is presented to the reader through Keith’s thoughts and in occasional dialogues between Keith and Laurie. Laurie’s outlook is therefore accessible to the reader only indirectly and in fragments. Yet, Keith’s thoughts are often with his son, and Laurie is in this sense a prominent character in the novel. In contrast to the characters of Earl and Keith, whose outlooks are oriented towards the known past, Laurie is representative of the present and the unknown future. His concurrent presence in and absence from the narrative fittingly hints at the fact that the implications of his generation have yet to be played out and mapped. Nonetheless, in moments of miscommunication between Keith and Laurie, the novel provides close-ups of a generational divide that attests to a gradual transition from a postcolonial order to an increasingly global, networked order.

Laurie has fallen “in with a bad set” (151) and has lost his “appetite for study” (217). Keith surmises that his son’s acting out is due to frustrations similar to those of his own generation of black Britons. To remedy what he supposes to be Laurie’s ambivalent relationship with Britain, Keith takes him on a tour of London:

‘Does this mean anything to you, Laurie?’ He gestures with his arms in a somewhat grand manner, hoping that the flamboyance of his motion will suggest a kind of ownership [...] Laurie shrugs his shoulders. ‘I’m not sure what you’re on about.’ ‘All of this is yours if you want it, but you’ll have to work harder than your mates. You’ve got to prove to your mates that you’re better than them, and you’ve got to remember that nobody is ever going to give you anything [...] You’re not really sure what I’m talking about, are you?’ ‘I haven’t got a clue.’ (155)

Father and son stand together on Westminster Bridge overlooking London and the Thames. Keith’s fatherly talk is meant to assure Laurie that “this is his city too” (153). Were he able to convincingly project “ownership”, his gesture towards the London cityscape would take on the aspect of an inalienable legacy that he here hands down to Laurie. However, the uncertainty implied by fact that Keith “hopes” to convey “a kind of” ownership effectively

cancels his bequest. Keith is not in a position to pass down a sense of ownership to his son because his relationship to England remains one of partial detachment. Keith's movements are mapped in detail with reference to particular street names and iconic locations in London, conveying his acute awareness of his own position within the wider maze of the city. This mode of careful navigation invokes the experience of the tourist who moves through an unfamiliar space and must therefore continuously keep track of his movements to avoid getting lost. Laurie's movements, by contrast, are casual, even playful, as he "lop[es]" (117) and "scampers" (122), his "headphones jammed onto his head" and "his body gently bobbing to the beat of the music" (117). While Keith is invariably "tense" (18), Laurie is at home in the streets of London. He therefore does not understand Keith's miscalculated counsel that he must "prove" his belonging. As when Keith misunderstands the real meaning of Earl's reference to "home", Keith's message to Laurie is here lost in translation due to a generational divide that signifies their individual affiliations with Britain and their different perspectives.

There is a telling difference in their way of regarding the cityscape as it unfolds before them when Keith brings Laurie to the London eye. Keith's perspective is historical: He sees "the switchback patterns of the River Thames" (151) from which "London developed as a great port city" (152); he notices the historical buildings of "the Tower of London and the Palace of Westminster and Waterloo station and St. Paul's Cathedral" (153). His focus is on the legacies of the past, on structures associated with the period of nation building, and on the ways in which these structures continue to define the layout of the city. Laurie, on the other hand, takes note of a "group of city businessmen" on a "corporate outing" (151) and he "points to the newly refurbished Wembley Stadium", his eyes "firmly fixed on the football stadium" (152-153). He focuses on the ongoing construction of London as a modern metropolis and on some of its central characters, namely the corporate elite. He is disinterested in the significance of the past. Instead, he 'points' to current reconfigurations of the cityscape, and thus, towards the future. Notably, Laurie's outlook is no less fragmented or partial than that of Keith; yet their orientational modes are fundamentally different. While one is single-mindedly directed towards the past, the other is 'fixated' on the future.

The distinct outlooks of Keith and Laurie point toward a more general difference between postcolonial and global ontologies. Thus, Simon Gikandi observes that "as the *post* in the term suggests, postcolonialism is a condition that must be contained both within and beyond the causality of colonial modernity" (Gikandi, 2001, p. 642). Postcolonialism serves

as a powerful mode for critiquing colonialism and represents the breakdown of a Eurocentric, imperial order. However, even as the postcolonial model seeks to “provide new vistas for understanding cultural flows”, it remains rooted in the legacies of the past which is critiques (ibid.). The postcolonial vocabulary of cultural ambivalence and liminality which provided a framework for Keith’s experience cannot denote the experience of Laurie. Keith is centred on the continuous influences of the past and therefore fails to recognise the ways in which Laurie’s reality differs from his own in significant ways. By contrast, “the discourse of globalization is surrounded by a rhetoric of newness” (Gikandi, 2001, pp. 628). It tends to present the contemporary moment as one of radical conceptual transformation. This future orientation is at risk of proclaiming the final marginalisation of previous models, and thus, of effecting an unproductive historical amnesia. As Gikandi asserts, “it is premature to argue that the images and narratives that denote a new global culture are connected to a global structure” (Gikandi, 2001, p. 632). While a new ontology is emerging, the implications of which are as yet elusive, earlier or older structures “continue to haunt and to shape the idea of culture” (Gikandi, 2001, p. 640).

For Keith’s generation, blackness is a primary identity marker that positions black Britons on the periphery of the national community, and Keith identifies with their “struggle” to revise the myth of a racially homogenous Britain. Meanwhile, as McLeod states, “Laurie’s challenges are those of a new generation of Britons” for whom “the matter of race perhaps unfolds differently” (McLeod, 2010, p. 45):

‘The thing is, Dad, I don’t know if things are the same now as they were when you were my age [...] It isn’t just about discrimination and stuff. I know that’s important, and that’s your job and everything, but it’s also about other things.’
 ‘Other things like what?’ ‘It’s got a lot to do with respect. You can’t let people just large it up in your face and disrespect you. A man’s got to have respect or he’s nothing better than somebody’s punk.’ (157)

Whereas Keith’s process of identification takes as its point of departure collective identity discourses –such as race, ethnicity, and nationality– Laurie emphasises individual agency. Blackness is not experienced by him as an absolute marker of identity that predetermines group loyalties. Therefore, in their continued focus on gradations of ‘black’ and ‘white’, existing characterisations of Laurie as epitomising a ‘mixed-race’ experience seem to fall

slightly off the mark⁴⁷. He is engaged in a personal struggle for “respect” that promotes recognition of the subject outside of absolute categories and communal frameworks. Ward argues that Laurie’s emphasis on ‘respect’ is emblematic of his identification with “urban American youth attitudes”. Ward holds that both Keith and Laurie “appear to be ‘looking across the Atlantic’ to the United States” for their models (Ward, 2011, pp. 301-302) and that Laurie’s attitudes are emblematic of a “black America[n]”, “gang-based youth culture” (Ward, 2011, pp. 297, 301). However, this reading adopts a Keith-like blindness towards the generational discontinuities and gaps at the heart of *In the Falling Snow*. Like Keith, it mistakes teenagers’ “baggy dress sense” (17) and call for “maximum respect” (33) for attributes of an essentially “black” (17) identity. I propose that Laurie is more accurately characterised as representative of an inherently new, de-territorialised youth culture. According to Laurie, this culture is centred on processes of individuation and is not, as Ward suggests, structured around group, or “gang”, affiliations. In this close-up, then, globalisation manifests as a new optics that is different from ontologies of the past as it disengages the subject from a stable sense of community. The subject is instead considered as the central node from which extends a personal network of de-territorialised attachments. And these attachments are actively hedged through assertions of individual agency to claim the “respect” of others.

Instead of “looking across the Atlantic” to black American music or to a Caribbean homeland for deep and substantial communal ties, Laurie fantasises about going to Barcelona to see his favourite football team, Barca. His keen interest in football is centred on the Spanish La Liga rather than the English Premier League. It is no insignificant point that Laurie is affiliated with a foreign European club and is comparably disinterested in the exploits of British clubs. Audience and fan loyalties in the sporting world are often considered active performances of more profound attachments to particular national and regional communities⁴⁸. Laurie identifies with a club that plays for a nation to which he has no inherent ties, nor even an abstract sense of cultural kinship. McLeod writes that “football

⁴⁷ See for example John McLeod, 2010; Dhouib, 2014; Ward, 2011.

⁴⁸ See also Caryl Phillips, “Leeds United, Life and Me” in *A New World Order: Selected Essays* (2001), pp. 298-301 wherein Phillips writes about his ambivalent football allegiances as representative of his ambivalent belonging to place and culture. Or, Mike Featherstone, “Body Cultures” in *Postcolonial Cultures* (2005) – on sport (dance, cricket, and football) as providing a heuristic framework for examining colonial, postcolonial, and global constructions and performances of race and cultural identity.

today is one popular cultural environment where older racial, national and class protocols are deliberately dispensed with”, and Laurie’s fan loyalties are representative of precisely this capacity to accommodate “transnational *and* localized affinities” simultaneously (McLeod, 2008, pp. 7-8). His sporting affinities are contingent upon excellent footballing skills irrespective of nationality or race. From his home city he looks for momentary connections to people and places of interest and he reaches readily across borders in the process of selecting his personal affinities.

Laurie’s emphasis on individual agency resonates with Bauman’s assertion that in the age of globalisation “the old stories of group (communal) belonging no longer ring true” and “the demand grows for identity stories”⁴⁹. Laurie seems to represent a mode of being-in-the-world that is very similar to Sen’s ‘global identity’: Rather than being predetermined by a racial and cultural heritage, his affiliations result from a deliberate process of selection. They transgress the absolutist confines of community as they accommodate a composite of “different associations and affiliations”⁵⁰. Indeed, Keith observes that “today’s teenagers no longer respect any boundaries” (17), whether territorial or conceptual. What I describe as Laurie’s ‘global orientation’ springs from this general disrespect of boundaries. His outlook resonates with Hardt & Negri’s characterisation of globalisation as the advent of an expansive perspective that “accepts no boundaries or limits” (see chapter one). Yet, in *In the Falling Snow*, a world without boundaries is not a space of conviviality through recognition of “the broad commonality of our shared humanity” as Sen argues⁵¹. In its openness, it is an unsettling and precarious space where, as Laurie explains, “[y]ou can get stabbed in this town for just looking at someone in the wrong way” (211). There is a permanent threat, “whether you know them or not” (ibid.), that someone will resort to violence in order to assert his or her ‘right’ to respect. In an open world where affinities are relative and subject to individual priority, loyalties are ever in question. It is an unpredictable and potentially dangerous space. Unlike Bauman and Sen’s theoretical imagings of phenomenological globalisation, the global order envisioned by Phillips thus neither laments nor celebrates the loss of community. It does, however, present as a *fait accompli* the arrival of a networked, de-territorialised

⁴⁹ See chapter one

⁵⁰ Ibid.

⁵¹ Ibid.

ontology that challenges familiar identity narratives and demands new frameworks for understanding the role of community and belonging in an age of shifting borders.

In *In the Falling Snow*, Laurie's de-territorialised experience of open access to global networks is contrasted with the comparably 'grounded' experience of Rolf. Whereas Laurie has the opportunity to travel to Spain or, as Keith suggests, to the Caribbean, for his summer vacation, Rolf does not have the means required to traverse the world's borders. Rolf possesses "only [his] clothes" (196) and he lives in a "stinking room" (195) in London where he works as a cleaner at night in an office building. Like the character Deniz in Dasgupta's *Tokyo Cancelled*, he has entered the physical space of a global hub, but has no access to its networks of privilege. His experience shares an important trait with that of Earl, as he, too, is stranded in England with no possibility of returning home. The England he encounters looks at once disturbingly similar to, yet different from the xenophobic England of Earl's narrative. Rolf exposes England as a site of significant social divides. As a night-time cleaner he is effectively segregated from the privileged elite that inhabits the office building during the day. He is "disappointed" in "English attitudes" (196) which label him as an unwanted stranger. He says to Keith:

Do you know what it is like to stand in a shop with money in your pocket and discover that nobody wants to serve you? Telling you with their eyes before you are even asking for anything. Do you know what this is like or how it feels?' The man points to his head. 'Can you imagine this?' (Ibid.)

The reader has an intimate insight into Keith's consciousness and therefore knows that Keith cannot only imagine, but genuinely relates to Rolf's narrative of discrimination through his own experiences. Indeed, as was the case when he met Danuta, Keith feels a sense of "kinship" (ibid.) with Rolf. However, Rolf addresses Keith not as a fellow outsider, but as an insider and a "rich man" (194). Like the other representatives of the new generation in the novel such as Danuta and Laurie, Rolf sees no immediate correlation between the colour of Keith's skin and Keith's national allegiances. The communitarian preoccupation with delineating inside as distinct from outside, members from strangers, it would seem, has shifted its focus from colonial discourses of race onto 'other things', as Laurie suggests.

Annabelle's boyfriend, Bruce, edits a documentary about immigration to Britain in the past decade. He represents a project to define the borders of the national community through a continuous profiling of the figure of the immigrant:

'You see the asylum-seekers, and those migrants from the sub-continent who come to marry their cousins, they have every right to be here no matter how hard some of us may find it to accept them. But this cheap Eastern European labour in the wake of EU expansion, well to Old Labour men like myself this just doesn't seem fair.'

(51)

Bruce's rhetoric attests to the continuation of ethnic stereotyping. Rolf from Latvia and Danuta from Poland are personifications of the unwelcome presence that he envisions. Both obtain only limited participation within the English national community. At first glance, the excommunication of these two characters thus seems a testimony to the persisting power of communitarian discourses to sustain and police the world's borders. However, these discourses of exclusion and inclusion differ in significant ways from those encountered by Keith in the 1980s. Firstly, community is not presented by Bruce as a racially or culturally homogenous space: Indeed, certain 'types' of 'otherness' have "every right" to exist within the nation. Meanwhile, while a new 'stranger danger' has appeared on stage, it is not defined according to absolute categorisations of race, ethnicity, and nationalism. Willing to work for low wages, immigrant workers from Eastern Europe outmanoeuvre the more expensive British labour. The new arrivals are unwelcome because of their competitiveness on the financial market, not due to some inherent difference that pollutes a mythically uniform nation. Thirdly, in spite of their conceptual excommunication, Rolf and Danuta continue to exercise varying degrees of individual agency through participation in, rather than disengagement from, the global hub and power centre that is metropolitan London.

Laurie, Danuta, and Rolf are representatives of a new, globally oriented generation. Yet, their very different experiences of the effects of globalisation problematise an easy reading of *In the Falling Snow* as a narrative of evolutionary development from a restrictive and bordered world order towards one of open networks and individual agency. Arguably, Laurie's de-territorialised outlook is made possible by his subject position. He is born in the multiracial, multicultural setting of metropolitan London where a daily practice of diversity refutes myths of uniformity. A member of the privileged middle classes, he has the financial freedom that

engenders also unlimited freedom of movement within networks of travel education. Rolf, by contrast, is a very different kind of ‘global subject’ whose experience differs fundamentally from that described by Sen. He is immobilised in terms of both geography and class. He is the object of divisive discourses which position him at the bottom of social hierarchies and offer him only limited participation. For Rolf, the world remains a bordered space. He is denied access to the very same networks that are open to Laurie.

Accordingly, as in Dasgupta’s *Tokyo Cancelled*, the global order envisioned by Phillips’ is one of austere social divides between an exterritorial elite and a grounded proletariat. It is a world where financial freedom breeds mobility and poverty implies immobilisation. In *In the Falling Snow*, the shape of phenomenological globalisation is thus contingent on the point of view from which it is experienced. While Laurie manifests globalisation as a new ontology that emphasises individual agency and a breakdown of borders, Rolf’s experience uncovers globalisation as a revision of residual, bordered identity narratives which keep him ‘in place’.

The moment when Earl tells his story to Keith, and Earl’s subsequent death, initiate a process of reorientation for Keith. Returning to London hours after Earl has passed away, Keith sees the city in a new light:

These houses are now highly sought after [...] but when they moved here from Birmingham, this area was hardly fancy or trendy [...] he realises how dramatically things have changed, and not only in this now-fancy part of the city. So that’s it then? His father has gone and now there’s nobody ahead of him. Nobody higher than him on the tree. (301)

Once more, Keith’s close-up orientation in the physical space of the city serves as a metaphor for his more general outlook, his world-view. The site is familiar to Keith; it is where he lived with Annabelle for twenty years, and during the three years of their separation, he has visited often. Presumably, the urban development has happened gradually over time, yet it appears here as a revelation to Keith. In this particular moment Keith’s otherwise limited perspective expands and he becomes aware of London as a changing metropolis that reflects the similarly fluctuating patterns of social organisation. Arguably, as Keith takes note of the dramatic change of the area into an affluent neighbourhood, he also awakens unto the reality that Danuta and Rolf have expressed to him; namely, that he is a “rich man” and not, as he

imagines, a member of a dispossessed ethnic minority. His position has changed since the 1980s from one of victimisation to one of privilege. Keith further realises that he does not belong to the new generation. The death of his father becomes a stepping-stone for understanding himself as the highest branch on the family tree, a middle-aged man, and no longer the new generation. In other words, it is the present and the future, not the past, which provide his central points of reference. This is a significant insight indeed: A more adequate understanding of his own subject position facilitates more successful navigation within his (social) environment. Whereas Keith previously read the world around him with reference to an outmoded inner map, he here takes stock of his present reality and sees that “things have changed”. Keith’s street view of London here signifies a re-awakening onto his position in time and space.

Appropriately, this epiphany is coupled by an abrupt sensory awakening as well. The traffic “dies down” and Keith feels himself “enveloped in a pocket of silence” (ibid.). For an instant there is no movement or sound and Keith seems to exist in a vacuum. Then, suddenly, the silence is broken by two lorries that “blast by” him (ibid.). The contrast between profound stillness and violent emission produces a sense of sudden, dynamic progression. Meanwhile, the slow-motion that dominated Keith’s narrative style has been interrupted, first by Earl’s monologue with few breaks and little punctuation, and next, by a notable absence of Keith’s abundant retrospection. This stylistic shift from inaction to action, from stasis to progression, mirrors a shift in Keith’s consciousness. It reflects that he has recovered a sense of continuity. This continuity is not, as he expected, found in community. As we have seen, community demands absolute affiliations and thus cannot accommodate Keith’s dual allegiances. The deep and substantial (rather than abstract) continuity for which he has been searching is located in his own family history. It is precisely at the moment when Earl begins his monologue that the narrative mode of the novel shifts into a higher gear. Accordingly, it is at the moment when Keith’s focus shifts from communal to individual and networked forms of embeddedness, from abstract to phenomenological ties, that he uncovers a sense of embeddedness.

Keith abandons his book and with it his anachronistic outlook. In metaphorical terms, he lets go of the quest for belonging to an imagined black community. He sees himself instead as part of an immediate family tree, a node within a web of lived connections which undergo continuous transformation. His new perspective is not contingent upon community as

the clearly delineated centre from which the subject emerges with an encoded set of stable affiliations. Rather, it envisions the subject as the centre of composite temporal, geographical, familial, and cultural ties which make up a contextualising, albeit shifting and continuously growing, web.

In the Falling Snow unfolds a moment in the life of Keith Gordon when an unexpected departure from his daily structure initiates a process of reorientation and engenders a new insight: Namely, that a reconfiguration of familiar identity narratives has taken place since the 1980s. This reconfiguration comprises a new way of seeing the world and of understanding the subject-in-context. *In the Falling Snow* may be characterised as a phenomenological globalisation narrative about the coming into being of a new ontology, expansive and networked in scope. Yet, *In the Falling Snow* is also a postcolonial novel that examines the enduring legacies of European imperialism in the present. For Earl and, to a large extent also Keith, the world remains a bordered space, where distinctions between insiders and outsiders, self and ‘other’, are drawn along the (increasingly blurry) lines of race and nation. This continuance of residual hierarchies in the novel iterates Gikandi’s assertion that, in spite of the “rhetoric of newness” that often surrounds globalisation, “older categories of identity [...] continue to haunt and to shape the idea of culture” (Gikandi, 2001, p. 640); thus, the “old time (of ‘tribe’, of pronation, and *Heimat*) coexists with the new time (of globalization, of newness, of the unhomely)” (ibid.).

I want to suggest, then, that *In the Falling Snow* envisions a temporal trajectory from a colonial to a postcolonial, and eventually, to a global order; epitomised in the close-ups of Earl, Keith, and Laurie, respectively. The generational setup of the novel places these three perspectives in a familial relationship: each character must be understood with reference to the experiences of the former generation, but at the same time also performs a restructuration of this inheritance. *In the Falling Snow* thus invites us to think about the continuities and the gaps which inform the relationship between the different ontologies that the three protagonists represent. It points towards a close connection between the colonial, the postcolonial, and the global that needs to be recognised. This connection is implied in Hardt & Negri’s conceptualisation of globalisation as a new imperialism which, in spite of its new networked sovereignty, also shares important characteristics with previous forms of imperialism. Arif Dirlik, too, describes the kinship between the three perspectives when he argues that each of

them represents a distinct phase “in the spatialization of the world by capitalism” (Dirlik, 2002, p. 430). This familial relation engenders a “shared cultural grammar” (Gikandi, 2001, p. 628) between postcolonial and global models of analyses. Both are concerned with explaining the breakdown of structures that grew out of the European imperial project and both emphasise “a general state of cultural transformation” (ibid.). Relatedly, Keith and Laurie both represent a radical rethinking of the identity narratives of Earl’s generation. The struggles of Keith’s generation to change the myth of a homogenous nation, to challenge residual hierarchies of race and culture, paved the way for Laurie’s unambiguous sense of ‘ownership’ of Britain in combination with other, transnational affinities. Keith is in this sense a forerunner and a facilitator of Laurie’s de-territorial and networked outlook. When articulating the ‘new’, border-crossing potential of the globalisation phenomenon, globalisation discourses draw directly upon “postcolonial vocabularies” of “hybridity and cultural transition” (Gikandi, 2001, p. 632). Globalisation therefore cannot be characterised as “disconnected” from “earlier or older forms of identity” at the heart of postcolonial analysis. However, it is my contention that, while the novel presents the past as a haunting influence upon the present –and so implies a generational continuity– its structuring trope is the generational gap that impedes communication between the three protagonists. Its central focus on generational differences calls attention to the pitfalls of adopting a Keith-like anachrony, succinctly described by Dirlik as “an exaggerated view of the hold of the past over the contemporary realities” (Dirlik, 2002, p. 429). If we accept the premise that each of the protagonists personifies a distinct ontology, then Earl’s death signifies the final passing of Eurocentric imperialism as it unfolded during the 20th century. It also signals the expiration of the bordered identity narratives integral to the imperial project which legitimated European domination and control of its colonies. A fixation on these structures of colonialism prevents a timely confrontation of “the reconfiguration of past legacies by contemporary restructurations of power” which “find expression presently in the concept of globalisation” (ibid.). Certainly, Laurie, Rolf, and Danuta represent a generation for whom “the vocabulary of colonialism appears distant, even foreign” (ibid.). The rhetoric of inside/outside, centre/periphery, members/strangers –which is strongly associated with the discursive focus of postcolonialism– falls short in rendering their experiences.

Globalisation Studies, however, provides a useful framework and vocabulary of networks and individual agency that is more in tune with Phillips’ depiction of this new

generation. It examines the fissures between the distinct experiences of different generations, migrants, and of diasporic and global subjects. These gaps revert communitarian discourses and promote a reading that pays particular attention to individual trajectories. From this perspective, similarities between characters are not, as Keith otherwise believes, emblematic of community or of kinship. They are instead points of convergence that establish a transient common ground, a space for communication and partial understanding.

In the Falling Snow calls attention to the simultaneity and confluence of numerous ontologies. It is, in this sense, a networked novel that wreaks havoc upon monologic discourses and grand narratives. However, the generational setup of the novel arranges these perspectives in a hierarchical order and implies a development from the colonial and postcolonial to the global. Laurie serves as an inadvertent guide for Keith. He unfolds the complexities of identity and belonging in a global age and, quite literally, ‘points’ Keith in the direction of the future. He is a representative of the new generation and an interlocutor of the networked order. This role endows Laurie –and the global– with a certain level of authority over the colonial and postcolonial in examinations of identity and belonging in the contemporary age. Thus, *In the Falling Snow* presents globalisation as a new ontology that challenges and, potentially, displaces earlier or older forms.

In Conclusion. The ‘Big Picture’.

Theoretical endeavours to image globalisation, as discussed in chapter one, have a tendency to create monistic globalisation discourses. More often than not, these theories provide either narratives of celebration or narratives of crisis, both representing globalisation in absolute terms. Thus, Hardt & Negri’s conception of globalisation as a network sovereignty places a liberatory and innovative potential with ‘the multitude’, which can overthrow oppressive systemic practices through social action. In this view, globalisation is predominantly a positive force. Marcuse’s understanding of globalisation as Westernization, and thus as a continuation of previous forms of imperialism, is foreboding. On a phenomenological level, the disengagement of the global subject from community identified by Bauman also forms a one-sided globalisation narrative of crisis. The subject is seen as unmoored from stabilising social structures and, consequently, also from social responsibility. By contrast, Sen posits the loss of community in a celebratory light as the liberation of the subject from constricting geographical and conceptual borders. Whether these theorists engage with globalisation on a macro- or a micro level, as a discourse of celebration or of crisis, they represent globalisation as a single development.

The literary works of Rana Dasgupta and Caryl Phillips examined in chapters two and three, however, cast globalisation in a much more ambiguous light. Hardt & Negri’s liberatory network sovereignty and Marcuse’s foreboding imperialism are reified in both *Tokyo Cancelled* and in *Solo*. In these works, the forces of globalisation, systemic and grass-roots alike, operate through a strategic engagement with network power. Yet, Dasgupta also reminds us that while the pathways through which sovereignty is distributed may have shifted, residual forms of domination continue to inform the present. In Dasgupta’s works, these theoretically distinct conceptions of structural globalisation coexist within the same literary space as equally potent and converging processes. Expansive and de-territorialising network powers operate confluent with bordered and territorial sovereignties. The revolutionary, liberatory potential that Hardt & Negri ascribe to globalisation is coupled with a continuation of residual, oppressive practices akin to Marcuse’s globalism. Phillips’ *A Distant Shore* and *In the Falling Snow* are concerned with globalisation on the phenomenological level. Nevertheless, they share with Dasgupta’s works this significant trait; namely, their amalgamation of globalisation narratives of celebration and of crisis within the text. *A Distant Shore* and *In the Falling Snow* are centred on a recent loss of community. The

characters experience this development as a deep existential crisis, as it is also characterised by Bauman. Yet, this crisis is combined with a tentatively optimistic potential. It incorporates a need to establish new models of identity and belonging which accommodate rather than dispel difference. The transient relationships and limited understanding that arise between Phillips' protagonists as a result of these endeavours to (re)connect recall Sen's idea of belonging as a compound of multivalent, relative attachments.

My examination of the four literary works included here, then, contributes first and foremost to a so far inadequately articulated conceptualisation of globalisation as a multidimensional narrative. It offers an insight that is different from, yet integrates theorisations of globalisation in political, economic, or social terms. The 'big picture' of globalisation that emerges from my critical engagement with *Tokyo Cancelled*, *Solo*, *A Distant Shore*, and *In the Falling Snow* incorporates multiple globalisation narratives simultaneously. These literary works speak to prominent theories of globalisation, without reference to which they cannot be properly understood. But they also add to and complexify the theoretical field. Dasgupta and Phillips bring competing and contrasting globalisation discourses together in their works, thus problematizing theoretical endeavours to reduce what is, in fact, a manifold reality to a single Narrative. In the artistic global imagination expressed in the selected works by Dasgupta and Phillips, globalisation is not derived from, nor contained within a single level of organisation. When studied as a textual characteristic in these works, globalisation unfurls as a multidimensional narrative that interweaves global and local perspectives and is characterised by a general awareness of worldwide causality.

The literary worlds of Dasgupta and Phillips share another notable characteristic. The global connections and ruptures they envision are facilitated, and to a large extent produced, by recent technological developments. Their representations of globalisation are informed by processes of modernisation and industrialisation. As an effect of these developments, geographically and culturally disparate characters and places come into close proximity. The encounters between the tailor and the Prince, Deniz and Klaus Kaufmann, Dorothy and Gabriel/Solomon, for example, result from this interconnectedness of the globe. The new proximity reflects a compression of time and space and ponders as to the implications of this historically unprecedented condition.

While their representations of globalisation are otherwise ambivalent, all four works deduct one certainty about the new global order of time-space compression: Globalisation

problematizes endeavours to delineate and police existing borders. It heralds, in other words, revolutionary structural and social transformations that necessitate a general renegotiation of traditional ways of mapping the world. The Kaufman Velocity IntegerTM (KVI) in “The House of the Frankfurt Mapmaker” and Gabriel/Solomon’s aerial view of a vast, borderless landscape in *A Distant Shore* serve as good examples of how Dasgupta and Phillips, quite literally, image alternative ‘world-views’.

While Dasgupta and Phillips’ imagings of globalisation share a common point of departure in globalisation discourses, their formal choices differ in important ways. The topical focus in *Tokyo Cancelled* and *Solo* is panoramic, or structural. The four selected stories from *Tokyo Cancelled* speak to overarching globalisation theories. They image globalisation through the broad spectrums of financialisation, rationalisation, consumerism, and social action, respectively. By conjoining these different concepts, *Tokyo Cancelled* constitutes a collective mapping of many different aspects of globalisation. The approach is contextual. It is a literary snapshot of the contemporary world order that accentuates convergences and divergences of global flows. *Solo* offers a similarly comprehensive perspective on globalisation. It reflects a wide temporal angle, envisaging a history of globalisation that takes its point of departure in the ‘discontinuous change’ that is 20th century modernity. Globalisation is represented as the most recent transformation in a series of restructurations prompted by modernisation processes in the past 100 years.

A Distant Shore and *In the Falling Snow*, by contrast, employ a close-up, or phenomenological focus. They image globalisation as a personal experience and a local practice. *A Distant Shore* zooms in on the global subject who is disengaged from community. Globalisation manifests as the unsettling ‘condition’ of being-out-of-place; one that provokes a fortification of existing, though increasingly porous, borders. In the allegorical microcosm of Weston, the supposed epitome of newness, globalisation, becomes instead a catalyst for the conservation of old configurations. *In the Falling Snow* offers an equally detailed representation of globalisation as a lived experience. Here, however, the disengagement of the global subject from community has given rise to a new ontology; a networked mode of identification that does not respect any boundaries. Thus, *A Distant Shore* and *In the Falling Snow* explore two converse, yet interrelated outcomes of the loss of community in a global age: One insular, the other expansive. Phillips’ two novels are published with an interregnum

of six years, the first in 2003 and the latter in 2009, and both are set in contemporary England. The two very different movements they explore happen within the same temporal, spatial, and cultural context. Yet, one takes place in the province and the other in the metropolis. Therein, when seen in conjunction, *A Distant Shore* and *In the Falling Snow* point to the fact that globalisation materialises locally in differing ways. The two novels engage with the diverse and often contradictory implications of globalisation. Nonetheless, both assess endeavours to preserve traditional, bordered models of being-in-the-world as unfeasible. All of Phillips' characters inhabit a world that is undergoing immense, structural changes. In effect, these characters are impelled to reevaluate residual practices and to instigate new, more serviceable ones on a local, personal level.

To these topical variations in Dasgupta and Phillips' approaches we can add significant differences in their narrative strategies as well. As we have seen in chapters two and three, Dasgupta and Phillips employ different genres. Dasgupta writes within the genre of romance while Phillips employs psychological realism. Through the symbolical language of romance, Dasgupta generates an interpretative distance, conveying an 'expression of reality'. This expression relates to, yet exists at a remove from the world outside the text. Dasgupta's characters are familiar to the reader. They are recognisable figures of contemporary life: The fashionista, the drifter, the CEO, the irregular migrant, the Hollywood film star, the taxi driver, the cutthroat business man or woman. However, they are not realistic representations of rounded individuals, but one-dimensional archetypes of globalisation. The environments they inhabit are both similar to, and different from our lived reality. The reader immediately recognises the iconic, rectilinear layout of Manhattan in "The Store on Madison Avenue" and the Parisian arrondissements in "The Changeling". From our personal experiences with air travel, we relate to the frustrations of the stranded passengers in "Arrivals" and "Departures". We understand the sense of incapacitation that arises when the modern technologies on which we have come to depend are put out of order. The risk of pandemics thematised in "The Changeling" is also well-known from recent, and in the media high-profiled, international events such as the out-break of SARS in 2002 and the spread of the Ebola virus in 2014. Moreover, the division of the globe into the separate, though interrelated, levels of production and consumption upon which "The Tailor" hinges is a recognised, if not accepted, fact of the global marketplace. The increasing paranoia and militarism of global capitalism in *Solo*

implicitly recalls the escalation of systemic surveillance and control in the name of ‘security’. On a more positive note, like Isabella and Pavel in “The Store on Madison Avenue”, the reader also recognises the welcome indulgence that informs consumer culture and the glamour of its commercial spectacle. Bernard and Fareed’s convivial poetry gardens and Boris’ prophetic music invoke the transformative and revolutionary power of art and of social action on a grass-roots level to cut across borders. It speaks to concrete mobilisations of transformative democratic forces on a global scale; the Occupy Wall Street movement, Avaaz, and Anonymous are cases in point.

These recognisable features from real-life experience are mingled with fabulous elements. The language of romance in *Tokyo Cancelled* and *Solo* transposes reality into symbolic realm: The powerful corporate world carries all the attributes and symbols of monarchical sovereignty; ‘inhuman’ practices take demonic forms; innovation appears as divine genius. Organic networks sprout like gardens and take root; dis/ease materialises as mysterious illnesses; materialism morphs people into objects. The abstract takes tangible forms in Dasgupta’s works. In the guise of fabulous archetypes and motifs we recognise prominent globalisation discourses. They are ‘imitations’, in Genette’s understanding of the term, of familiar figures from storytelling tradition; the Ruler and the Recluse, the Damsel in Distress and the Killer, the Demigod and the Demon, the Outcast, the Sage, and the Trickster. Dasgupta represents the unprecedented global order in an ancient language of storytelling, hinging the unknown and the familiar. The effect is powerful: It provides an already existing vocabulary with which to address and evaluate an unparalleled and therefore seemingly unrelatable condition. Meanwhile, the storytelling vocabulary is, in turn, transformed by this new application, by the inscription of a new reality into an ancient literary tradition.

Like the panorama, then, Dasgupta offers expansive (literary) views of the interplay between disparate, but connected aspects of globalisation. *Tokyo Cancelled* and *Solo* contextualise globalisation. They render the otherwise complex phenomenon of globalisation comprehensible through a strategic employment of the fabulous.

Whereas Dasgupta uses a symbolic language at a remove from reality, Phillips’ narratives are realistic. Phillip unfolds realistically a figural consciousness. In effect, a detailed representation of globalisation appears in *A Distant Shore* and *In the Falling Snow* as it is ‘really’ experienced, locally and personally. Phillips’ characters do not serve a particular function to the overall narrative, but centre and drive it. Nor do they represent a single

character trait. They embody instead rounded and ambiguous identities. Thus, the landlord in Weston is not an intrinsically ‘bad guy’; his hostility towards newcomers is a product of the anxiety he experiences at bearing witness to the unsettling corrosion of his familiar environment. Keith’s persistent failures to understand Earl and Laurie derive not from an innate obtuseness, but from his personal experience and subject position which differ from theirs. In a similar fashion, Dorothy’s loving concern for her little sister in adulthood is complicated by her silent transgressions against her during childhood; her cosmopolitan offering of friendship to Gabriel/Solomon is mingled with contrasting displays of racial prejudice against minorities in general; her efforts to carry herself with dignity are thwarted by her deteriorating psychological condition. Gabriel/Solomon has the qualities of a saviour and a hero, but he is also a warrior who has committed massacres and murder. He feels protective and is empathetic towards Denise, yet a suspicion lingers that he may have taken advantage of her youth and her vulnerability, as the state prosecution believes. Phillips’ characters have complex histories. They are products of their individual trajectories and of their multi-layered cultural and social contexts. They cannot be classified in archetypal terms as heroes or villains, but perform both heroic and villainous actions.

The narrative style of *A Distant Shore* and *In the Falling Snow* –the detailed insight into the minds of the characters and the centring of the narrative through their point of view– leads the reader to empathise with the characters, to put him or herself in their place. It draws the reader into close proximity of the experiencing mind of Phillips’ characters. ‘Up close’, reality cannot be represented in absolute terms of good or evil, celebration or crisis; nor can it be comprehensively mapped. In Phillips’ works we therefore encounter globalisation not as a discernible structural pattern, but as a development that impacts on our being-in-the-world.

For the sake of the clarity of my argument, in chapters two and three I distinguish unambiguously between Dasgupta’s panoramic and Phillips’ close-up approaches. However, there are, of course, occasional exceptions to this schematic setup. The individual works also interweave global and local, panoramic and close-up scales.

Thus, the tailor roaming the streets of the capital and Pavel’s visions of the very fabric of the world, are exemplary close-up moments. The tailor’s understanding of the capital deepens through personal experience with and observation of life in the streets. His is an emphatically ‘street-view’ perspective. Indeed, the tailor reminds us of de Certeau’s

pedestrian who walks in the city and, as he walks, ‘reads’ and ‘interprets’ it one street, one experience at a time. Pavel receives visions of the very substance of the world in “The Store on Madison Avenue”. This moment of in-depth vision reifies William Henry Olley’s description of the close-up as a medium that unveils “the wonders of a world hitherto [...] wholly invisible”. The literary panoramas in *Tokyo Cancelled* incorporate a certain level of local detail absorbed within global structures. *Tokyo Cancelled* explores the dynamics of expansive structures, but also contains the ‘smaller’ stories of the characters that people and manage them.

Phillips’ close-ups also reach beyond their frame. They are focused on the locally situated experience of individual characters. Yet, they also hint at the expansive networks of temporal, geographical, and social ties which inform this experience. In *A Distant Shore*, Gabriel/Solomon’s encounters with the English System unveil a decrepit society: The people who represent the English bureaucracy are depicted as outwardly unappealing. One of Gabriel/Solomon’s warders is “a tall stocky man” (76); another is “scruffy” and “unkempt” with “a straggly beard” and “sour breath”, his skin looking “pale, almost waxen” (167-168). His doctor is “impossibly thin” (81) and his solicitor has “spidery hands” (114) and “looks like a schoolboy with his mousy hair and spectacles” (110). Their unhealthy exterior is coupled with their general callousness, externally manifesting an internal deficiency. They are two-dimensional personifications of the English system. Their physical appearance represents an intrinsically degenerate nature, recurrently revealed in the nation’s ‘uncivil’ treatment of its newcomers. The imagery pronounces a general diagnosis, a panoramic glimpse, of the System that informs Dorothy and Gabriel/Solomon’s experiences. The generational trajectory envisioned in *In the Falling Snow* renders a panoramic, temporal outlook. It shows how identity and belonging have changed markedly over time as a result of globalisation processes. Through the collective experiences of Earl, Keith, and Laurie, the novel accesses an expansive view of three generations and over fifty years of immigration history in Britain. Phillips’ works thus occasionally take a step back to capture an image of time-space as a global totality.

Solo in particular complicates the heuristic opposition of panoramic and close-up perspectives. Like *Tokyo Cancelled*, *Solo* engages with globalisation on a panoramic level. It takes a point of departure in Ulrich’s metonymic everyman status and in world history as it unfolds over an entire century. It diagnoses the driving forces of structural globalisation as

growing out of visionary artistic and business endeavours, respectively. *Solo*'s hypertextual relationship with traditional storytelling practices; its formulaic sequences, archetypal characters, and symbolical language of romance are also panoramic elements.

Yet, the entirety of *Solo* plays out within Ulrich's mind and represents his inner life. Its style can be usefully described with reference to Cohn's three levels of narrative consciousness in the 3rd person. As a matter of fact, whereas *A Distant Shore* and *In the Falling Snow* are written primarily as quoted and narrated monologue, *Solo* digs one level deeper into the mind of the experiencing subject. Quoted and narrated monologue are forms of self-address and mimic the mental language of a character. They are restricted in their point of view to what the character 'knows' and therefore cannot convey sub-verbal states. Psycho-narration, on the other hand, is a "narrator's discourse about a character's consciousness" (Cohn, 1978, p. 14) and is not, as the two other forms, primarily a method for representing mental language. It can therefore "articulate a psychic life that remains un verbalized, penumbral, or obscure" to the character himself (Cohn, 1978, p. 46). *Solo* alternates between psycho narration, quoted monologue, and narrated monologue, giving the reader insight into the deepest levels of Ulrich's subconscious, to which even Ulrich does not have direct access. For example, reflecting upon a particular situation when Magdalena smiles at Ulrich, the narrating voice tells the reader that "Ulrich was carried away to see her smile at him [and he] has carried that smile with him ever since, even as it has become progressively detached from the time and place, and, finally, from Magdalena herself" (69). To Ulrich himself, the memory is no longer associative of Magdalena, yet the reader is aware of its original source. In the sense that *Solo* thus zooms in on the consciousness of the experiencing subject, it reflects a close-up approach.

However, this extreme zooming in on Ulrich's consciousness can also be considered a fabulous or 'unrealistic' trait and thus as adding to the distancing language of romance. In rendering Ulrich's un-verbalised and unrecognised thoughts, it fantastically provides the reader access to something that is, essentially, inaccessible. It renders in language that which is beyond words. The interlocking of panoramic and close-up perspectives in *Solo* cannot be successfully untwined, neither in topical terms, nor in terms of formal narrative techniques. The works of Dasgupta and Phillips are purposely selective and highly deliberate in their employment of perspective. They apply particular narrative strategies to produce what I have described as panoramic and close-up representations of globalisation, respectively. However,

each of these approaches also simultaneously alludes to a more complex reality beyond its own textual frame. They intimate, to varying degrees, a correlation between the global and the local, between structural and phenomenological aspects of globalisation. In *Tokyo Cancelled*, *Solo*, *A Distant Shore*, and *In the Falling Snow*, globalisation is represented as a confluence of scales. It is the confluence of scales in the literary works of Dasgupta and Phillips that most notably separates them from the theories of globalisation discussed in chapter one. –And it is in their insistent emphasis on this confluence that they, as works of art, add most significantly to these theories.

The four works by Dasgupta and Phillips produce complementary images of the world as a totality, as a global, though never homogeneous, space determined by exchange and circulation. Each in their way employs different textual devices, plots, and characters as it gives specific content and meaning to the concept of globalisation and renders globalisation visible and available to the reader. Such representations in literature of the globe as a totality are, of course, not inherently new. Indeed, as Mariano Siskind observes, the novel form has produced and reproduced powerful and prevalent images of globality since its conception in the 18th century (Siskind, 2010). In the past such images have been primarily associated with the particular “ideological operation” of European cosmopolitanism and bourgeois culture. They have been largely seen as embedded in a “cosmopolitan project that aims at articulating cultural difference in order to foster emancipatory goals” (Siskind, 2010, p. 355). Dasgupta and Phillips’ works, in my view, cannot be defined according to this single-mindedly ideological agenda (Siskind, 2010, pp. 336, 337). The literary ‘world-views’ they image are highly ambiguous. They do not present globalisation as rooted in a particular ideological discourse or project. They take instead a networked approach to representing globalisation. The network, we remember from chapter one, does not, associate a specific hierarchy, an –ism, or an ideology. It is not intrinsically expansive or bordered, emancipatory or regulatory. Rather, the network offers a particular approach to representing globalisation. In Dasgupta and Phillips’ works, time-space compression is a precondition of contemporary life, for better or for worse. So, too, is the visibility of global causality that results from this condition of spatial and temporal proximity. Global time-space appears as an ingrained connectivity that operates on multiple levels between different networks of circulation. Events and actions may occur on either a macro or a micro level, but invariably they ripple through ties of relation that

connect these different levels; they appear in other locations and other times, often in an unanticipated or altered form. The unpredictability and uncontrollability of this worldwide connectivity is a central characteristic in Dasgupta and Phillips' globalisation narratives. The forces of globalisation in various forms infiltrate locality, but through processes of adaptation, translation, and appropriation these forces are, in turn, transformed by the encounter. Thus, by considering globalisation as a textual characteristic in Dasgupta and Phillips' works, that is, as emerging from within the texts rather than as a (ideological) discourse that batters on them from the outside, we uncover the complex dynamics and uses of globalisation narratives. Globalisation becomes visible first and foremost as a general awareness of confluent networks which are honed and hijacked by competing global and local actors.

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